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A CONCISE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN

BY
D. C. SOMERVELL, M.A.

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PREFACE

THE present book, in two volumes, contains, with a few additions and alterations, those parts of my *History for British Schools* which deal with British History in the accepted sense of the words. My own view is that a school curriculum for the adolescent stage should present History on lines somewhat broader than "British"; that History for British boys and girls should not be merely British History. Still, examinations are stubborn things, and the present book has been prepared for the sake of those who like the way in which British History is treated in my *History for British Schools* but are unable to make use of the non-British parts of that book.

The second volume contains a concluding section on the Great War and the Post-war world. This is not yet, as a rule, a subject for examinations, and I have not attempted the task—which I should consider an absurd one—of making it purely "British." I have treated it as it seems to me an Englishman would naturally treat it—as a "World" event, the British aspects of which receive somewhat fuller treatment than a Frenchman or a German would give them.

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CHAPTER I

ROMAN BRITAIN

(i) *Before the Roman Conquest*

WHERE does British history begin? If we push back as far as science can reach we find a time when there was no such place as Britain on the map at all, when the distribution of land and water on the face of the globe was entirely different from what it is at present. That is not British history, you will say; yet that period still exercises its influence over us, for its vegetation has fossilised into the coal which enabled us to lead the world in industry at the time of the Industrial Revolution a hundred and fifty years ago. But the coal was laid down at a time when there was no Man to see it. Beginnings of History

Let us move on some hundreds of thousands of years. Britain now exists, and rather more than Britain, but it is not yet the British Isles, for it is part of the continent of Europe. The Thames was a tributary of the Rhine, and the united rivers meandered down a broad flat valley where is now the shallow North Sea. Rude huntsmen appeared, who dwelt in caves and used rough flint implements. Among their neighbours were the mammoth and the woolly rhinoceros, both now extinct. These huntsmen, or rather their neighbours in Spain, have left us some wonderfully vivid drawings of animals on the walls and roofs of their caves.

Then comes a long gap, and a succession of ice-ages when, for reasons which historians are not expected to understand, the snow-caps of the Poles extended far down into the temperate zone. The mountain valleys of northern England and Scotland are full of moraine heaps deposited by the

glaciers of these times. The last Ice Age was perhaps 50,000 years ago. Meanwhile the Channel and the North Sea had met in the Straits of Dover and separated us from Europe. When Man reappeared in the country he had made a great advance upon the artistic huntsman. Though he had ceased, apparently, to draw animals he had learnt to domesticate them. His flint implements were made with far superior skill, and he had learnt to smelt copper and tin, thus making bronze. At some stage in his long career he had learnt to grow wheat. He also had a religion, for he buried his folk, or at any rate his chieftains, with great care. That amazing relic of the mysterious past, Stonehenge, was raised to honour or propitiate the dead. No one can date Stonehenge, but it may perhaps have been erected about 1000 B.C.; if so, it is contemporary with the Trojan War and the reign of King David. Stonehenge is not the only monument of its kind. There are several others, either smaller or less perfectly preserved, in England, and several in France.

The Celts

About 600 B.C. the Celts arrived, with iron weapons, and conquered the bronze-using race whom they found in possession. They were of the same race as the Gauls of France, and no doubt maintained connexion with them by trade across the Channel. The Celts seem to have come in three "waves"—first the Goidels or Gaels, whose language survives in the north of Scotland and has recently been artificially revived in Ireland; then the Britons, whose language survives in Wales, and finally the Belgae, who came only about a hundred years before Caesar's visits, and settled in the south-east. Their chief city was Colchester. These Celts are famous for their mysterious priesthood, the Druids, about whom Caesar tells us something. They were, he says, excused military duties and taxation. They acted as judges: learnt by heart large amounts of sacred poetry; taught the doctrine of the survival of the soul after death; and offered human sacrifices—criminals by preference, but others if no criminals were available.

About 325 B.C. a Greek named Pytheas visited our shores and has left the earliest written account of us. He came from the Greek colony of Marseilles, and was perhaps prospecting for trade on behalf of the merchants of that city. He visited Cornwall and Kent, remarked on the abundance of wheat, the gloomy climate, and the local drink, a sort of beer prepared from grain fermented with honey. This "mead" continued to be drunk until well on in the Middle Ages. Pytheas was a contemporary of Alexander the Great.

A Greek visitor

Between Pytheas and Julius Caesar are two hundred and seventy-five years. The Britons (let us call all these inhabitants "Britons") continued to improve themselves, no doubt, partly learning from their own experiences and still more, perhaps, learning from their betters on the more civilised mainland. We find coins, and these coins are quite obviously very clumsy imitations of the *stater* of the Macedonian kings, which was accepted as good money by traders all over western Europe.

And so we reach those famous visits of Julius Caesar in 55 and 54 B.C. They are famous because Caesar was one of the greatest figures in Roman history, and because he left an account of his visits in what became one of the standard school books of Europe. But in themselves they were not important. They were not conquests, but flying visits from an unwelcomed guest. The first lasted only a few weeks and penetrated only a few miles from the coast of Kent; on the second occasion Caesar marched through Kent, crossed the Thames near Kingston and captured an "oppidum" which is generally identified with St. Albans. It is hard to say what Caesar's purpose was, but he certainly failed to achieve it.

Julius Cæsar

Caesar's expeditions to Britain are much less important in British history than Caesar's conquest of Gaul. Henceforth the Roman Empire was a next-door neighbour. Modern history shows, in every quarter of the world, how the presence of a civilised empire, British India for example, inevitably affects the barbaric tribes that lie along its

frontiers. Britain remained independent of Roman rule for a hundred years after Caesar's visits; none the less it was being steadily "Romanised" in advance of the coming of the legions. The notable figure of this period is King Cunobelin of Colchester, Shakespeare's Cymbeline. He encouraged Roman traders, and called himself Cunobelinus Rex on his coins; and his coins are so well made that we may assume he employed an artificer from the Roman Empire to make them.

Before we pass on to the Roman conquest we ought to form some idea of what Roman Empire means. Perhaps this would be the simplest way of putting it. What we call Western or European civilisation was born and grew up *not* in England or France or Germany, but along the coasts of the Mediterranean. At a time when Britain was barbaric and dumb Greece was already producing her masterpieces of art and literature. An elaborate commerce and finance, a luxurious civilisation developed. Then, for various reasons which belong to Roman, not to British, history, the political and military control of the whole area of this Greek civilisation passed into the hands of the Romans, between, say, 200 and 100 B.C. This civilised area was politically unified, and Roman rule, the bearer of this civilisation, proceeded to extend itself westwards into lands hitherto quite outside this civilisation—Spain, Gaul, and ultimately Britain. When Britain became a Roman province, it became a member of civilised society. It entered "history" in the full and complete sense of the word.

Roman Civilisation

(ii) *Britain as a Roman Province*

Julius Caesar's latter days were spent in civil war against his Roman rivals and, as everyone knows, he was murdered by Brutus and Cassius. A few years later, however, his nephew Augustus established the rule of Emperors. At last the Roman world enjoyed internal peace under a wonderfully organised military despotism. It was Claudius, the third emperor after Augustus, who undertook the conquest

of Britain, and Aulus Plautius commanded the invading army of about 40,000 men.

We do not know what new factors in the situation led Claudius to decide on the conquest of our island. Roman Conquest He had decided to suppress the cruel religion of the Druids in Gaul, and we know that the Druids of Gaul and Britain formed a single priesthood: thus his motive may have been religious and humane. It may be, and this is more likely, that Roman traders who had ventured into Britain demanded that their government should stretch out its military arm and afford them security. Cunobelin, the judicious friend of Rome, had died in A.D. 41, and civil war broke out among his sons; and civil war is inconvenient to traders. The spread of Roman influence had made Roman conquest ultimately inevitable. If such was the cause, the history of the growth of modern empires, *e.g.* our own in India, could furnish many parallels. A strong and enlightened chieftain, appreciative of the higher civilisation of the empire on his borders, establishes friendly contact with that empire. The "influence" of the empire permeates his country. He dies, and his successors, for one reason or another, show signs of relapsing into barbarism. The empire must either abandon the "influence" it has peaceably acquired or establish and fortify that influence by means of military conquest.

Aulus Plautius spent four years in Britain. He quickly captured Camelodunum (Colchester), the capital of Cunobelin's kingdom. A Roman colony was established there, and Caractacus, the rebel son of Cunobelin, fled to the highlands of Wales. Before he left Britain Aulus Plautius had subdued all the country that lies east of the Severn and the Devonshire moors and south of the Peek District and the Wash. His successors carried the war into Wales. Caractacus fought some fierce battles on the Welsh frontier; a striking hill in Shropshire, Caer Caradoc, bears his name. He was captured and sent to Rome, where he was more fortunate than many other barbarian chieftains, for Claudius spared him and gave him a pension. There is a

story that he was so impressed by the splendours of Rome that he exclaimed, "Why should the owners of all this covet our poor huts in Britain?" Much the same reflection may have crossed the mind of later captive chieftains visiting the capitals of their conquerors—the Zulu Cetewayo, for example, after being shown the sights of London.

In 60 B.C., while the Roman commander Paulinus was subduing North Wales, there broke out in Norfolk the famous rebellion of the "British warrior queen," Boadicea, who had been arrested and scourged for opposing the exactions and tyrannies of Roman officials. It was an heroic effort, doomed to failure, and it was apparently the last attempt of the Lowlanders of the island to reassert their independence.

Agricola and Hadrian

In A.D. 78 the most famous of our Roman governors, Agricola, arrived and set himself to achieve a complete conquest of the British Isles. He advanced into the highlands of Scotland and won a great victory called the battle of the Grampian Mountain, but he was not given an opportunity of showing whether he could complete his ambitious design. Perhaps its expensiveness was the reason of Agricola's recall. The Romans long hesitated between the Forth–Clyde and the Tyne–Solway as their northern frontier. Agricola laid a line of forts along the isthmus between the Forth and the Clyde, but Hadrian withdrew the line of defence to his famous Wall from the Tyne to the Solway (A.D. 124). Once again, during the reign of the next Emperor, Antoninus Pius, the frontier was moved forward to the Forth, but it did not stay there long. The Romans paid to Scotland the same doubtful compliment that they paid to Germany; they decided to leave it alone.

Events in the history of Roman Britain

In the troubled times that followed the death of Marcus Aurelius and the reign of his unworthy son Commodus, we find a governor of Britain named Albinus setting up a claim to be Emperor (A.D. 193) and sailing away with the British garrison to Gaul to seek his fortune. His fortune turned out to be defeat and

death at the hands of his rival, Septimius Severus, on the Rhone near Lyons. Severus afterwards visited Britain and died at York. He was the father of Caracalla, the author of the famous Edict already mentioned.

Almost exactly a hundred years later the experiment of Albinus was repeated by Carausius, the commander of the fleet which defended the eastern coast of Britain from the Saxon pirates, who began their depredations at about this time. Carausius and his successor, Allectus, reigned as "emperors" in Britain for ten years (A.D. 286–296), until conquered by Constantius, one of the "partner-emperors" of Diocletian. Constantius afterwards died in Britain (A.D. 306), and it was at York that his son Constantine, destined to leave so deep a mark on the Roman world, was proclaimed Emperor. Hence doubtless the legend that Constantine's mother was a British princess, and a daughter of the mythical "Old King Cole," whose festive character is celebrated in a nursery rhyme.

Yet on the whole Roman Britain enjoyed a very remarkable period of peace and prosperity in the third and fourth centuries, when other and hitherto more fortunate provinces, such as Gaul, were rapidly crumbling into ruin. No doubt our island situation protected us for a long time from the great movements of disruption. At last, when Roman rule ended and the barbarous Saxons poured in, the rudiments of this Roman civilisation were carried across to the still remoter and better protected island of Ireland. For a short period in the Dark Ages Ireland was the centre of civilisation.

End of Roman rule in Britain

But this habit of Roman governors proclaiming themselves Emperors, and setting forth to seek their fortunes on the Continent was to be the ruin of distant provinces like Britain. In A.D. 383 one Maximus took the title of Emperor and left Britain with the greater part of the garrison troops, just at a time when Hadrian's Wall had been broken down, and the Picts and Scots, as they were called, were pouring in from Scotland and Ireland. Neither he nor his army ever returned, and in A.D. 409 a certain Constantine repeated the performance.

The civilian population were at their wits' end, and begged the Emperor Honorius to send them a new garrison. But the wretched Honorius had more pressing matters to attend to. Alaric was marching on Rome, and the Britons were told that they must shift for themselves. It was not that Britain broke loose from the Empire. The Empire gave up Britain.

In what respects did the Britons who begged the Roman armies to return in A.D. 410 differ from the Britons who had fought the Roman armies nearly four hundred years before? The answer may be given by correcting the form of the question. The Britons of A.D. 410 were Romans, and the army whose return they longed for was their own provincial army, Roman by allegiance but British by race.

Romanisation

The Britain of Roman civilisation was a somewhat limited area. We have already said that the Roman armies were stationed on the frontiers, and this fact applies not only to the Empire as a whole but also to each frontier province. We must fairly rigidly distinguish the military area and the civilian area. In the military area there were permanent camps, but hardly any towns, and little civilisation: in the civilian area there were no Roman armies but much "Romanisation." The first was an area of constant fighting; the second of fairly unbroken peace except during the first twenty and the last fifty years of the occupation. The dividing lines between these two areas are roughly the Trent and the Severn.

Military and civil areas

Military Britain was dominated by the three great legion garrisons, York, Chester and Caerleon in Monmouthshire. The auxiliaries were scattered in small fortified posts. Of these we know of about twenty in Wales, sixty or seventy in the north of England, south of Hadrian's Wall, and over thirty north of the Wall. Of course, these were not all in use at the same time. The Wall itself is the most impressive memorial of Roman Britain. Its central section "passes along a marvellous line of natural defence, a line of

sheer basalt cliffs that face the north. Here, as a traveller wrote a century ago, the remains of ancient splendour abide in bold characters. Forts stand visible on the hillsides, lifting above the grass the masses of their stubborn masonry: the Wall itself still rises shoulder high for hundreds of yards together: nature and man combine in a unique landscape. As you look east and west, and trace the long line of wall winding for miles from end to end of perilous ridges and climbing from hill to hill, as you turn south to the Tyne and the dark fells beyond it, or north to long flat wastes and pathless mosses, the vision of a great Empire rises. On these high moors we can realise, almost more clearly than in the Forum of Rome, the secret of that defence by which Rome guarded the fabric of civilisation through the long menace of darkness and dissolution."[1]

In about the year 300 the Roman Government had to add a new military area to their responsibility, which bore the ominous name of the "Saxon coast." We have already mentioned the rebel Carausius, who based his power on the fleet which guarded these shores. After his downfall the fleet was supported by a series of coastal forts stretching from Brancaster in the north-west corner of Norfolk round to Porchester close to Portsmouth. The headquarters of this system of defences was at Richborough near Sandwich.

Tacitus on the Britons

But the armies no doubt lived a life apart, and civilian Britain, though it owed everything to them, thought very little about them. Civilian Britain in fact thought less about fighting than it had ever done before or was ever to do again until some time after the Norman Conquest. Tribal warfare was brought to an end. We have in the Roman biography of Agricola, written by his son-in-law Tacitus, a vivid little picture of the process of Romanisation as it appeared to a contemptuous Roman observer. "Agricola thought that a nation accustomed to live in scattered hamlets and with little comfort, and thereby easily roused to war, might be lured to quiet

[1] From *The Roman Occupation of Britain*, by Haverfield and Macdonald.

and peace through the pleasures of life. He exhorted them in public, and aided them in private, to build temples, market places, and solid houses. He induced the chiefs to allow their sons to be trained in the liberal arts. Thus it came about that provincials who had but lately refused to learn our tongue were found manifesting a desire to shine in Latin eloquence. Roman dress became the fashion, and the toga was frequently seen. By degrees the Britons began to appreciate those attractive instruments of social corruption, pillared colonnades, public baths, and elegant banquets: all this the simple people called civilisation, but it was really the mark of their enslavement."

While reading such a passage one naturally thinks of the parallel case of Western education in India. But the parallel is a very misleading one. The Briton was separated from the Roman by no barrier of race or of colour. To civilise him was in fact to Romanise him, whereas the result of Western civilisation in India is to emphasise in many respects the differences and antipathies between the conquering and conquered races. The Roman Government never had to cope with problems of that kind. A Roman writer of light verse, writing about A.D. 100, pays compliments to a lady named Claudia, who, "though descended from a painted Briton, had the heart of a Roman." Very likely the poet himself, when he wrote this, forgot that he himself was descended from a Spaniard. Britain did not, however, like Spain or Gaul or Africa, produce any "Romans" of first-rate eminence, unless one allows the claim to the celebrated Christian heretic Pelagius (about A.D. 400), whose name is simply a Latinisation of the familiar Welsh name of Morgan.

London was already the chief town in the island when the Romans came, and it continued to be so, though the centre of government was naturally established within the military area, at York. So far as we can judge from the areas of their remains, the cities next in population after London were Cirencester, St. Albans, and Wroxeter (in Shropshire).

CHAPTER II

ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

(i) *The Great Blank*

When we try to follow the fortunes of our island beyond the point where it passes out of the Roman Empire, a great difficulty confronts us. We possess practically no trustworthy written records of the history of England from the time when the Roman army left it, until the time when the Roman missionary Augustine came to it, a period of nearly two hundred years (409–597). The only contemporary writer on the subject was a monk named Gildas who composed, probably in Brittany, a pious but vague and confusing work with the quaint title of "The Pitiful Book of the Destruction of Britain."[1] Gildas is a man of few facts and many lamentations. Nearly two hundred years later we have the work of an excellent historian, the Venerable Bede, and a hundred and fifty years later still the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle drawn up under the orders of Alfred the Great. But neither Bede nor the authors of the Chronicle can have had much opportunity for obtaining accurate information

[1] *De Excidio Britanniae Liber Querulus.*

about what happened in a period of barbaric violence so long before their time.

Two theories of the Saxon Conquest

So we have to reconstruct the story of the great blank in our annals by means of intelligent guess-work, and, needless to say, many different guesses have been made, and the authors of these guesses have sometimes recorded them as if they were established facts. It is best to recognise at once that we really know next to nothing about what is called the Anglo-Saxon conquest. There are two rival theories on this difficult subject which, in their extremer forms, are in flat contradiction to one another. We will state them both. Perhaps the truth lies somewhere between the two.

The older theory is that the heathen pirates from the north German and Danish coasts—Angles, Saxons, and Jutes—who had already given trouble to the Roman Government during the last century of its existence, fell upon the now leaderless Britons in large numbers, and proceeded not only to conquer but to exterminate them. The coming of the Anglo-Saxons is represented as a genuine migration on a large scale. The new-comers brought their womenfolk with them, and established in fact a wholly new "nation." Such of the Britons as were not killed were driven into the western peninsulas of Cumbria, Wales, and Cornwall. Writers of this school treat Roman Britain as an episode that has really nothing to do with the history of the English people. The beginnings of that history, they say, must be sought in Germany, just as the beginnings of the history of the United States are to be sought in England and not in the history of the Red Indians who lived in North America before the coming of the Pilgrim Fathers. It is in deference to this view that orators sometimes speak of us as the Anglo-Saxon race, when they want to be impressive. The strong argument in favour of this view is that the Anglo-Saxon *language* did, in fact, entirely supplant both Latin and British or Celtic as the language of all England except the western peninsulas;

whereas in France, for example, the tongue of the Frankish invaders gave place to "rustic Latin." Therefore, they say, the barbarian conquest of England must have been something altogether different in character from, and far more drastic in its methods than, the Frankish conquest of Gaul.

The supporters of the other and more modern (but not necessarily for that reason more correct) view say that, though an overland migration of a whole people may be conducted on a large and overwhelming scale, it is impossible to conceive whole peoples transporting themselves in this manner overseas, especially in the small vessels of such an age. The so-called Anglo-Saxon conquest was, they say, a comparatively small affair. A certain number of gangs of pirates established themselves all along the eastern and southern coasts of Britain, from the Tyne round to Southampton, and founded heathen pirate States, which nowhere penetrated far inland. The incessant warfare of the period 400–600 was not a systematic Anglo-Saxon conquest but a confused welter of little wars in which British tribes, Picts, Scots, and Anglo-Saxons all fought, now this way and now that, often Britons against Britons and Saxons against Saxons. The importance of the Anglo-Saxon conquests lay not in their extent, which was small, but in their geographical position. For they completely severed the connection between old Roman Britain and the Continent. Thus the British were not so much conquered, much less exterminated, as "starved" out of civilisation by being cut off from the source of their supply of it.

But what about the victory of the Anglo-Saxon *language*, which, as we said, was the strongest argument for the older theory? To this argument some of the supporters of the newer theory have an ingenious answer. Augustine, they remind us, brought Christianity to the Anglo-Saxons of Kent. Afterwards he went and preached to the inland peoples, who, according to this theory, were Britons, and for the most part Christians, whose Christianity dated

back to the old days of Roman rule. However, these British Christians, cut off from Rome for two centuries by the barrier of the Anglo-Saxon States, had become in certain small matters heretical, and rejected the preaching of Augustine. There ensued during the next century a struggle between the two forms of Christianity,—the *old* Roman or British, and the *new* Roman or Papal, as adopted by the Anglo-Saxons, and preached in the Anglo-Saxon tongue. The latter won, and its triumph carried with it the triumph of the Anglo-Saxon language.

Such are the two theories.[1] If I am to express my own opinion, it would be somewhat as follows. I feel that the argument just stated, which tries to explain the spread of the Anglo-Saxon language while denying the spread of the Anglo-Saxon race, is more ingenious than convincing. At the same time, I believe that the notion that the British population was exterminated is quite false. I fancy that there was a real Anglo-Saxon conquest reaching to the frontiers of Wales and the other peninsulas, but I can also well believe that the new-comers were much less numerous than the Britons who survived and dwelt among them; that the two peoples gradually became one, and that our blood is less than half Anglo-Saxon; and that many remnants of Roman institutions, particularly towns and roads, survived and exercised a civilising influence on the new-comers. In fact, I believe that Roman Britain is not an isolated episode, but a foundation which the Anglo-Saxons preserved and on which they gradually learnt to build.

A middle theory suggested

(ii) *From Augustine to Alfred*

Augustine, the Benedictine monk, sent by Pope Gregory the Great with forty companions, landed at Ebbsfleet in Thanet in 597. This event marks the end of "the great blank," and is, in fact, the beginning of a new Roman conquest of Britain. Let us try to

Augustine's Mission

[1] The first theory will be found in almost any nineteenth-century book; the second is powerfully stated, in its extremest form, in Mr. Belloc's *Europe and the Faith.*

forget the great position we occupy in the modern world, and see these facts as they really were. Britain was a rather insignificant island on the edge of civilisation. During the "great blank" it slipped away into outer darkness and barbarism. Then a strong arm was stretched out again from Rome, the centre of civilisation, and we were brought back into the daylight. Towards the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, this outlying island showed signs of drifting away again. Once more the strong arm was stretched out, and the Norman Conquest brought us for the third time "into Europe."

King Ethelbert's queen had come to him from France and was a Christian from her birth, and thus Augustine found his work made comparatively easy for him. Both the King and his people seem to have been ready converts. The missionaries were given an old ruined church at Canterbury, dating from Roman times. They rebuilt it, and Canterbury Cathedral now stands on its site. Thirty years later (627) Edwin of Northumbria, the most powerful king in the country, was persuaded by his wife, a daughter of Ethelbert of Kent, to accept Christianity, and the queen's chaplain, Paulinus, became the first Bishop of York just as Augustine had been the first Archbishop of Canterbury. Six years later, however, Edwin was overthrown by Penda, the heathen King of Mercia, and Paulinus fled back to Kent.

When Christianity was restored in Northumbria it came from a different source. One must not forget that, when Augustine came to convert the heathen Saxons, there was already a considerable population— how large we shall never know—of Christians in the British Isles. Christianity had spread into Britain just as over all the rest of the Roman Empire during the first four centuries. We read, for example, the name of St. Alban as the first British Christian to suffer martyrdom in Diocletian's persecution, and of three British bishops attending a Council at Arles in the South of France in 314. British Christianity was carried to Ireland by St. Patrick at about

The mission from Iona

the time when the Roman Government relinquished Britain. Irish Christianity produced monasteries which became famous for their piety and learning all over Christendom, and one of these Irish monks, St. Columba, founded a monastery on Iona,[1] a small island off the coast of Mull, in 563. This little island is only about three miles long and one mile broad, and its population in 1901 numbered only 213, but the monastery of St. Columba became a centre from which missionaries were despatched far and wide for the conversion of the Scots and Picts and the Angles of Northumbria. It became also a centre for pilgrimages from all northern Europe. In later days, however, it was plundered and sacked by the heathen Northmen. It is pleasant to quote the words written by the great Dr. Johnson after his visit to Iona in 1773. "We were now treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. . . . That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the field of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."

The Synod of Whitby

King Oswald of Northumbria, who restored the independence of his kingdom by defeating Penda of Mercia in 635, had passed his youth in exile and had been converted to Christianity in the monastery of Iona. At his invitation, a missionary named Aidan was sent from Iona to take up the task Paulinus had abandoned. He seems to have been a true saint, and his labours were rewarded. But now a troublesome question arose. The converts of Aidan, and no doubt many other Christians throughout England who either owed their faith to the Celtic missionaries or had inherited it from families that had been Christians since the days of the Roman Empire, differed in certain practices, such as the shape of the priest's tonsure or the method of calculating the date of Easter, from the converts of the papal mission. Such trivial differences are always intolerable to the ecclesiastical

[1] Also called Icolmkill, or the Isle of Columba's Cell.

mind, and bitter disputes arose. Wilfrid, who was perhaps rather too pleased with himself for having visited Rome, and Colman, the successor of Aidan, were the champions of the rival parties, and the dispute was brought before Oswy, Oswald's successor, at a Conference called the Synod of Whitby, in 664. We hardly know whether to take seriously Bede's story of the conference. He tells us that Wilfrid secured the King's support by arguing that the customs he supported were derived from St. Peter, and that St. Peter held the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. However that may be, the Roman cause triumphed.

It was an important decision and, beyond doubt, a very fortunate one. St. Peter might or might not hold the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, but Rome certainly held the keys of civilisation on earth. By adopting the Roman rule the English Church became a part of the Catholic Church and a sharer in its wider life. How much the English Church had to gain by this was quickly illustrated. Four years later (668), Theodore of Tarsus was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury by the Pope, and sent to organise a united Church of England in dioceses and parishes, and to introduce the system of penances which taught these barbarians (for such we must remember they were) that deeds of violence were not merely wrongs which justified the vengeance taken by the family of the person wronged, but also sins for which God required satisfaction. It is typical of the debt of England in early days to the older centres of civilisation that a Greek from St. Paul's own city should have been sent to complete the work begun seventy years before by the Benedictine Monk, Augustine.

In the course of the next century the English Church produced some very remarkable men. Three in particular may be noticed. Bede, Boniface, and Alcuin.

Bede, Boniface, and Alcuin

Bede lived, from the age of seven until his death at the age of sixty-two (735), in the monastery of Jarrow in the county of Durham, devoting himself to learning and literary work. The most valuable of his books is the charming *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, which

is perhaps the best historical work produced in western Europe during the Dark Ages. He also composed religious treatises based on the writings of the Latin Fathers—Augustine, Jerome and Gregory—and at the time of his death he was engaged on a translation of St. John's Gospel into Anglo-Saxon, which has unfortunately been lost. It is obvious from his works that he had a good library at his disposal. Boniface was a Devonshire monk who devoted himself to preaching Christianity among the heathen Germans. He frequently visited Rome and was keenly supported both by the Popes and by Charles Martel. He was a great organiser as well as a great preacher, and did for the Church in western Germany very much what Theodore did for the Church in England. He was also one of the chief promoters of the authority of the Popes beyond the Alps. He and his companions were massacred by the heathen in 754. Alcuin was born at York in the year of Bede's death. He went to Rome in 780 on a mission from his archbishop, and in Italy chanced to meet Charles the Great, who persuaded him to come to his Court. Here he spent most of the rest of his life, devoting himself to educational work. It is generally supposed that he was a leader of the party which urged Charles to assume the title of Roman Emperor.

Many of the Anglo-Saxon Kings seem to have been men of great piety. Several of them made pilgrimages to Rome, and made extensive gifts of land to the Church. In later ages the vast territorial possessions of the Church were no doubt an evil, but in the Anglo-Saxon period it is probable that the monasteries were much the best landlords.

Village organisation

The old English village organised its agriculture on a system the main features of which survived over a large part of England until about a hundred and twenty years ago. The whole of the land of the village was treated as a single farm, under the management of the village assembly or "town-moot." But though there was common management, there was not common ownership. The arable land was divided into three large fields, one sown, in any given year, with wheat, rye, or

oats for food, another with barley for drink (the old English were great drinkers), and the third lying fallow. Each of the villagers held strips of these fields, varying in number according to his rank in the village, and distributed over different parts of the field in order that each might have a share of whatever land was of the best quality. The ploughing of the field was carried out under common management, and the ploughs and oxen for ploughing would usually be the joint property of many villagers. Outside the area of the three fields was the common meadow for hay, and the "waste" for pasture.

Here we see not only a system of agriculture but also a system of local self-government, through a "town-moot" or parish council. This system of self-government was extended, in theory at any rate, to larger areas. There were hundred-moots for each hundred or group of parishes, and shire-moots for each shire, and the shires of the south-east were in early days petty kingdoms each with its own king. Thus if the main business of the town-moot was agriculture, the main business of the shire-moot would be war, and in this the ordinary villager would be very much less interested. Now when people are confronted with a task they cannot or do not want to do themselves, their ordinary course is to pay someone else to do it. So it would fall out in a Saxon village. Some important member of the community with a taste for "politics" and for fighting would consent to go to meet the king at the shire-moot, and to fight for him; and he would see that he was well paid, not in money but in produce or labour, by his fellow villagers. Such a man as this is in a fair way to becoming a thegn, knight, feudal baron, or squire. Or again it may be that the king takes the first steps. He is unable himself to control all his villages, and secure that his men follow him to the field in war, so he selects one of his *gesiths* or companions, one, that is, of his fighting men who have not settled down to the life of agriculture, and appoints him his representative in a certain village. He gives him a good share of the land on condition that he will come to the

Self-government and feudalism

shire-moot and to battle, and will bring with him a proper number of villagers suitably armed. In the first case we have feudalism growing up "from below"; in the second feudalism imposed "from above." As the kingdoms grow bigger, and many shires are merged into one kingdom, the king becomes more powerful but also more remote, and the squire or thegn becomes a more important and independent person.

But fighting and preparation for fighting was not the only business of government even in Anglo-Saxon times. There was also the maintenance of order and the administration of justice. In the most primitive stage of all, any wrongful action was simply the affair of the person wronged or his family, and the only "justice" was the blood feud. As, however, the blood feud was a nuisance to everyone concerned, the community intervened to provide a settlement by compensation. The hundred-moots and the shire-moots were courts of justice fixing the fines payable as compensation (*wergild*) to injured parties. At these courts it was the king's duty to preside, and he made the suitors at his court pay him for his pains. Thus in addition to the fine paid to the injured party, the convicted wrongdoer has also to pay a fine to "the State." In fact, throughout the Middle Ages, legal business was an important source of State revenue. *Justitia est magnum emolumentum*, says a legal writer of Henry II's reign. But it was impossible for the king to preside at all his courts in person. He had to find a deputy, and who so suitable as the man he had already appointed or accepted as his local representative for military purposes? Thus the future feudal baron becomes not only a territorial military commander but also a territorial judge, and the manor court largely takes the place of the royal courts of justice.

Justice

The methods of administering justice in these courts were primitive in the extreme. There were no trained lawyers, no rules of evidence, no impartial jury. To secure acquittal, an accused person had to bring into court twelve compurgators—persons, that is, who were willing to swear that they knew him to be innocent. Those who could not

secure twelve compurgators had to appeal to the judgment of heaven, which was supposed to be revealed by the result of an "ordeal." If the accused could walk over red hot ploughshares or plunge his arm into boiling water without receiving more than a certain amount of injury, his innocence was held to be proved. At a later date "ordeal" was superseded by "trial by battle." No doubt honesty, common-sense, and fair play secured a kind of rough justice in these old courts, in spite of the absurd methods employed.

The "Heptarchy" and the Danes

A writer of Queen Elizabeth's reign invented the name Heptarchy (Seven kingdoms) to describe the divisions of England during the two hundred years or so (600–800) from Augustine to Egbert, who was regarded as the first King of all England. The seven kingdoms were supposed to be Kent, Sussex, Essex, East Anglia, Wessex, Mercia, Northumbria. Actually there was never a time when these seven kindgoms, neither more nor less, all existed side by side. Kent was powerful at the time of Augustine's mission, but soon ceased to be so. Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex overshadowed the others, and each of these three in turn claimed a kind of supremacy over the whole country. We have already mentioned Edwin, the first Christian King of Northumbria (627). He extended his power far to the north and founded Edinburgh; to the west also, and launched a fleet at Chester which conquered the "isle of the Angles,"—Anglesea. Penda of Mercia overthrew Edwin, but then Oswald of Northumbria overthrew Penda, and Northumbria continued to be the leading kingdom through the seventh century. In the eighth century Mercia takes the first place, especially in the reign of Offa (755–795), with whom Charles the Great thought of making a marriage alliance. The supremacy of Wessex begins with Egbert (802–839). He had spent some years in exile at Charles's court, and, so far as we can tell, he was a very fine fellow, but it was largely a matter of accident that he became, as we see him in retrospect, the first "King of England," and the ancestor of all our long line of kings (except William the Conqueror). In Egbert's

reign the Danes came and blotted out Mercia and Northumbria from the map. Henceforth the tedious civil wars of the "Heptarchy" were over. Once again there was an issue at stake really worth fighting about. Egbert and his son and his grandsons were fighting the old battle in defence of Roman and Christian civilisation against the heathen and barbarian from without. The youngest of Egbert's grandsons was Alfred the Great (871–900).

Alfred was born in 848, and at the age of seven he was taken to Rome by his father, Ethelwulf. Active life began for him at the age of eighteen when he was appointed "second king" to assist his elder brother Ethelred, whom he succeeded in 871. In this year the Danes, who were already masters of Northumbria and Mercia, made a terrific onslaught on Wessex, and Alfred fought nine battles against them with varying success in Berkshire and Wiltshire. In the next few years the Danes looked like extinguishing the Christian kingdom. In 877 they got past Alfred and seized Exeter, in 878 they drove him out of Chippenham, and he had to move his headquarters to the fort of Athelney in the Somerset marshes. Here he organised his counter-offensive[1] with brilliant results, for he won a great victory at Edington in Wiltshire (878), after which the Danish chieftain, Guthrum, accepted baptism and consented, by the so-called Treaty of Wedmore, to withdraw his forces to the north-east of the Roman road (Watling St.) from London to Chester. This victory deserves to be grouped with Châlons, Tours, and Lechfeld as one of the four decisive victories of Christendom in the Dark Ages. Seven years later (885) Guthrum surrendered London and a considerable stretch of territory round it. In 892 came another invasion; the Danes landed in Kent and Essex under Hasting, whom the Chronicle describes as "the worst man that ever was born." There were, we are told, three hundred and thirty shiploads of invaders, which may well mean ten or fifteen thousand persons: but we can never trust the figures of primitive historians, for, as Dr. John-

Alfred and the Danes

[1] Historians dismiss the story of the cakes as a "foolish legend."

son says—"to count is a modern, and to guess an ancient, practice." Anyhow this invasion meant five more years of stubborn fighting. Then at last Alfred had peace. The Danes found it paid better to go elsewhere for, as their own poet said, in England

> "They got hard knocks instead of shillings
> And the axe's weight instead of tribute."

Alfred set himself in his intervals of peace to build forts and reorganise his army. He also improved the fleet which had been founded by his father. But it is not for these things alone, or even chiefly, that we should remember him. He set himself, as Charles had done across the Channel a hundred years before, to revive learning among his people, and Alfred could take a much larger personal share in this great work than Charles had done, for he was a much better scholar. The English clergy had, in the century and a half since the death of Bede, become practically illiterate, that is to say, ignorant of Latin, the only language of literature. Alfred set himself to prepare translations of the best books he knew of, some of the works of Gregory the Great, Bede's *History of England*, the Universal History of Orosius, and *The Consolation of Philosophy* written by the pagan Boethius in the reign of Theodoric. Some he translated himself, some he got translated by others, contenting himself with writing a preface. He also instituted the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which was the first history of any European nation written in its own language. We possess several versions of the Chronicle. Down to 892 the versions are identical, whereas after that date they differ considerably. The reason for this is that the earlier entries were drawn up under Alfred's direction, after which the Chronicles were entrusted to various monasteries, whose monks entered, or omitted to enter, such facts as seemed to them important, year by year. The longest version is carried down to the year 1154.

The greatness of Alfred

Alfred's ideal is expressed in his instruction that every free-born youth "should abide at his book till he can well understand English writing." We did not, as a nation, set

about realising this ideal till 1870, almost exactly a thousand years after Alfred's accession. We have a charming contemporary biography of this great king by a Briton or Welshman in his service, named Asser.

(iii) *Saxons, Danes, and Normans*

Alfred's successors were not, like him, men of many-sided genius, but they were strong kings and stout fighters.

Athelstan and Edgar

Under Edward the Elder, Athelstan, Edmund, Edred, and Edgar the task of conquering what had been Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia, and was now called the Danelaw, was carried on and completed. Athelstan won a great victory over a combination of Danes and northern Welsh (from Strathclyde, *i.e.* Cumbria and Galloway) at Brunanburgh (937), which is conjectured to be Bourne in Lincolnshire. Edgar (959–975), the last of this line of strong kings, was entitled "the Peaceful," which proved that the good work was done. He was the king who was rowed, according to the story, by six kings on the river Dee. From his reign dates that shadowy claim to an overlordship over Scotland, which was afterwards put forward in earnest by Edward I. Edgar's reign is also notable for the fact that his chief adviser was the celebrated St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, who is always reckoned the first of our long line of episcopal statesmen, which ends with Wolsey on the eve of the Reformation. But we know little of Dunstan. He remains a shadowy figure, a name everyone knows but about whom few could tell us anything except the delightful legend that he seized the Devil by the nose with a pair of tongs.

Earldoms and serfdom

Three important new developments may be associated with Edgar's reign. First, there was an attempt to revive the discipline of monastic life, a fact from which we gather that the monasteries had been, like scholarship, deteriorating since the early days. Secondly, it is in this reign that we hear of the country being parcelled out among a few great "aldermen," later called by the Danish title of "earls." These earls grow steadily in power from

this date onwards, and in fact their virtual independence under weak kings like Ethelred the Unready and Edward the Confessor shows that the monarchy before the Norman Conquest failed in the task of ruling a united England. These "earls" are in fact great feudal chieftains of the kind that had already become common in France and Germany. In England their development was abruptly arrested by William the Conqueror, who gave to feudalism in England a peculiar character of its own, as will appear in the next Book.

The third development had no doubt long been in progress. We find that the majority of the smaller cultivators of the village were ceasing to be freemen and becoming serfs, "bound to the soil" which they were forbidden to leave, and compelled to cultivate the land of their lord, who would be either the king or one of his earls, or the thegn of the district. Probably the cause of this change is to be found in the Danish wars. The invaders would obliterate the old village life, and the poor would be compelled to accept serfdom or starve. Constant warfare also kept the warrior class away from their agricultural duties, and some system had to be established to secure that their land was cultivated by their inferiors during their absence.

Edgar left two sons—Edward, who was murdered four years later, and Ethelred the Unready, *i.e.* the Redeless or "without counsel," whose long and dismal reign extends from 979 to 1016. He involved himself in wars with his own aldermen, and in the midst of these wars the Danish invasions began again. He reversed Alfred's policy, and offered "shillings" instead of "hard knocks," raising the money by the notorious tax of Danegeld. The new invaders were not mere sea-rovers out for plunder and forcible colonisation, but kings seeking to annex England to a Scandinavian Empire. In 1013 the heathen Danish King, Svend, drove Ethelred right out of England: he fled to Normandy, for he had married Emma, the sister of the Norman Duke. Svend died, and his place was taken by his son, the Christian Canute. Ethelred returned to England,

Ethelred the Unready

and died also, being succeeded by his son Edmund Ironside. Edmund and Canute fought a round of battles which suggest that Edmund was a worthy successor of Alfred. Then Edmund was, apparently, murdered, and Canute recognised as King of England. The two young sons of Ethelred by his Norman wife were sent to Normandy.

Canute

Canute seems to have been an excellent king. He kept a bodyguard of several thousand Danes, but, having thus ensured that he should be feared, he treated Danes and English as equals, and chose Englishmen as his earls: Siward (who comes into *Macbeth*) as Earl of Northumbria, Leofric as Earl of Mercia, and Godwin as Earl of Wessex. Although Canute had the cares of both England and Denmark on his shoulders, he found time to make a pilgrimage to Rome, and wrote home to his subjects from that city a letter full of the most admirable Christian sentiments; and everyone knows the improving story of how he sat on the sea shore and let the tide wet his feet, in order to show his courtiers that he could not rule the waves. On his death, however, the fatal results of the division of the kingdom into great earldoms began to show itself. Godwin and Wessex chose one son of the dead king, named Hardicanute, and the Mercians chose another, named Harold. By 1042 both sons were dead, and Edward, son of Ethelred and Emma, was summoned home from Normandy to take the crown.

Edward the Confessor

A curious parallel might be drawn between the reign of Edward the Confessor and the reign of that much less pious but more intelligent monarch, Charles II. Each king came to the throne as the result of a restoration of an old dynasty, after a prolonged residence abroad in the country of his mother's birth—in one case Normandy and in the other France. Both were, as a result, essentially foreigners in England, and both were greatly influenced by the able and vigorous rulers of the lands of their exile—in one case William of Normandy and in the other Louis XIV. The story of both reigns is the story of the struggle of a patriotic English party against this foreign influence. The part played by the Whigs in Charles II's reign is played in

the reign of Edward the Confessor by Godwin and his son, Harold. But the conclusions of the two stories are quite unlike each other.

The Normans and Godwin

Edward was more fit to be a monk than a king. His chief interest seems to have been the building of Westminster Abbey—not the Abbey we know to-day, of course, the earliest portion of which dates from Henry III's reign. Edward's virtues, such as they were, no doubt strengthened his disposition to prefer Normans to Saxons, for the Normans were more civilised, more learned, and more religious. He filled his court with Normans, and appointed one of them, Robert of Jumièges, Archbishop of Canterbury. Godwin was, in modern language, "leader of opposition"; but the English were by no means united under his leadership. He had a great many sons, and his success in providing them all with earldoms led to quarrels with the families of the earls of Mercia and Northumbria. It is likely enough that these districts, having been largely colonised by Danes, disliked the restoration of the old Saxon line and would have preferred another Danish king.

William of Normandy

In 1051 Edward and Godwin quarrelled, and it was the northern earls, Leofric and Siward, who secured Godwin's banishment. While Godwin was away, Edward received a visit from his cousin William, Duke of Normandy, and promised him the succession to the throne. This was not Edward's to give. It is true that the rules of hereditary succession were then, and remained long afterwards, much vaguer than they are to-day, but the choice of a new king in doubtful cases lay not with his predecessor but with the Witanagemot, or Council of Wise Men. But William was playing for high stakes. He had already proved himself a ruler of remarkable strength by the manner in which he had beaten down the opposition of the feudal barons of his own dukedom.

In the next year, 1052, Godwin returned and drove out the Norman favourites, securing the appointment of a Saxon, Stigand, to the archbishopric—a very improper

proceeding, as Robert of Jumièges was still alive. Then Godwin died, and was succeeded as Earl of Wessex by his son Harold. Harold was a vigorous and attractive man, but he continued Godwin's fatal policy of promoting members of his own family to all available earldoms. Tostig, his brother, was made Earl of Northumbria instead of the son of Siward. Some say, however, that Tostig was the favourite of Edward, and that Harold had nothing to do with this appointment. Tostig was driven out of his earldom, and the Northumbrians chose Morcar, brother of Edwin, Earl of Mercia; both these were sons of Leofric the former Earl of Mercia.

When Edward died childless in January 1066 there were three possible successors. Edgar the Atheling (Prince) represented the old royal house, being a grandson of Edmund Ironside, but he was a mere boy. The others were Harold and William. The Witan chose Harold, and William immediately put forward his rival claim, and proceeded to gather round himself a formidable host of supporters by promising them a share in the spoils of conquest. He also appealed successfully for support from the Papacy, which, as will be seen in the next chapter, had recently secured greater authority in Christendom than it had ever before possessed. The Normans were at this date the most active allies of the Church, and were beginning to adorn Normandy, as they afterwards adorned England, with their magnificent churches. The Papacy had also special reasons for supporting William against Harold. Harold's father had expelled the rightful Archbishop of Canterbury, and Harold himself had, two years before, been wrecked on the Norman coast and made a prisoner by William, and had sworn a solemn and religious oath to support William's claim to the English throne: only on these terms would his ruthless rival release him from captivity. (The famous Bayeux Tapestry, which records the history of the Norman Conquest in a series of pictures, begins the story with Harold's captivity and oath.) So the Pope sent William a blessing on his expedition,

William and the Papacy

and a consecrated banner. The Norman Conquest has been called "the First Crusade," for it was an undertaking officially blessed by the Church.

How the struggle would have been decided if William and Harold could have fought it out under equal conditions we shall never know, for Harold was called on to defend himself against two invasions at once. Stamford Bridge While he was waiting for William on the south coast, news came that Harold Hardrada, the King of Norway, together with the traitor Tostig, had sailed up the Humber and landed in Yorkshire. Harold dashed north with his army, hearing on the way that the invaders had defeated Edwin and Morcar. He himself decisively defeated the Norse army at Stamford Bridge, between York and Hull, both Tostig and Harold Hardrada being killed in the battle; but his absence from the south had proved fatal, for in the meantime William had landed without opposition. Harold dashed south once again—the speed of his marches as recorded in the Chronicle is unfortunately incredible, so we can give no dates. Some say Edwin and Morcar deserted him; others say that, even had they wished, they could not have arrived in time to take part in the battle that decided the fate of England.

The battle of Hastings was fought on October 14, close to where Battle Abbey now stands. It was won by the force with the better discipline, the better equipment, and the more resourceful leader. In spite of their Hastings long experience of warfare with mounted Danes, the English had never learnt to employ cavalry, and they had no archers. William had both, and his decisive movement seems to have been a feigned flight, the most difficult and risky of all tactical operations. In the end Harold's bodyguard of "house-carls" were left to hold the ridge alone, and were slaughtered, with their leader, as they stood. With the death of Harold the resistance of the English nation collapsed: perhaps we can hardly give the name of "nation" to a people so divided and irresolute. The Londoners chose Edgar as king. Edwin and Morcar went back north to look after

their own earldoms. William secured the southern counties at his leisure, marched up the south bank of the Thames to Wallingford, crossed the river and made his way round north-eastwards to Little Berkhamsted, fifteen miles from London. Here the leaders of the city and their puppet king met him and made their submission. William thereupon entered London, and was crowned on Christmas Day, 1066.

BOOK II

THE MIDDLE AGES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Middle Ages may, so far as British History is concerned, be dated from the accession of William the Conqueror to the accession of Henry VII, the first Tudor, at the end of the Wars of the Roses—1066–1485, a period of four hundred and twenty years, very nearly as long as the period between Henry VII's accession and the present day. Our subject will, in the main, be England, though we shall have something to say of her small neighbours, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, and also of her great neighbour, Western Europe.

It will be convenient to divide the period into four sections, and to give a chapter to each. These may be called —from the Norman Conquest to Magna Carta, a century and a half, 1066–1215; the Thirteenth Century, 1215–1297; the Fourteenth Century, 1286–1399; and the Fifteenth Century, 1399–1485. Within each of these we shall have to study a variety of subjects: the development of government, law and order; the relations of Church and State; the relations of England with Scotland, Ireland and Wales; her relations with continental countries, particularly France; social life, industry and trade; literature and art; and such other subjects as may arise. Hence each chapter is divided into sections, each of which, as a rule, will cover the whole of the period to which the chapter is devoted.

It is perhaps well to anticipate here a few of the salient and familiar features that fall within each chapter.

In Chapter II (1066–1215) we shall follow the building-up of a strong and orderly monarchical government under William I and the first two Henries, and its collapse in the reign of John with the triumph of the Barons and the signing

of Magna Carta; the building up of a continental Empire, stretching from Normandy to the Pyrenees under Henry II, and its loss, again under the deservedly unfortunate John; the Church-and-State controversies connected with the names of Anselm, Becket and Langton; the Crusade of Richard I; and the beginnings of the conquest of Ireland.

In Chapter III (1215–1297) we shall trace the story of the origins of Parliament, and the rise and fall of Simon de Montfort; the growth of English national sentiment; the early developments of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge; the conquest of Wales.

In Chapter IV (1286–1399) we shall follow the attempt of Edward I to conquer Scotland and of Edward III to conquer France; the growing power of Parliament, culminating in the use of impeachment and the deposition of Richard II; the appalling catastrophe of the Black Death and the social and economic changes it involved, together with the famous Peasants' Revolt; the appearance of the first great Protestant reformer, Wycliffe, and the first great English poet, Chaucer.

Chapter V (1399–1485) will cover the period of the Houses of York and Lancaster, the second half of the Hundred Years' War under Henry V and VI, and the Wars of the Roses. We shall find that, though politically our period ends with a general collapse, there has been a quiet, solid progress of the middle classes in wealth and intelligence. In fact, the foundations of the brilliant Tudor period have been laid in an age which, at first sight, seems marked by nothing but decay and dissolution.

The term "Middle Ages" is a convenient label for this long period, but it is apt to mislead. It has suggested the popular notion that this was a long period of monotony and stagnation, when the world stood still, or at least moved round and round in a circle, until it was quite suddenly jerked forward on to the paths of progress by what we call the Renaissance and the Reformation. This is not true at all. The Middle Ages were a period of continuous and steady change, each century being quite unlike its predecessor in general

character. The roots of both Renaissance and Reformation lie far back in the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages were not, as some have supposed, so many centuries of wasted time.

Yet it must not be forgotten that the Middle Ages have a real unity, a character which separates them from the periods before and after them. They are the period in which a certain peculiar religious idealism dominated the minds of men. No doubt the idealism often assumed absurd forms, from our point of view. It was often tainted with hypocrisy, particularly in the latter half of the period. But at its best it was a beautiful thing. Nor was it a small, exclusive thing, like so many of our religious and artistic movements of modern times. It gripped the minds of sinners as well as saints, of the ignorant as well as the learned. It sought in its own crude way to make the prayer "Thy Kingdom come" a realised fact. It recognised in the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, a higher authority than any national government. Its greatest imperialistic ambition was the conquest of "The Holy Land." Its architecture was devoted, first and foremost, to building "Houses of God," which we still treasure and, often at great cost, preserve to-day. Its popular drama was the realistic presentation of Bible stories. Its greatest poet, Dante, wrote of Hell, Purgatory and Heaven. Its great thinkers were theologians, that is, students of the Nature of God, and the relationship between God and Man. Thousands of men and women sought to get nearer to Heaven by isolating themselves from worldly interests and interning themselves in monasteries and nunneries. Thousands more, after St. Francis and St. Dominic (who lived in the time of King John), sought the same end by a different road, and, vowing themselves to poverty, attempted a literal imitation of the life of Our Lord and His disciples. Of all this, both its success and its failure, we shall see much in the pages that follow. These things do not make up the whole of the Middle Ages, but they are its most distinctive features.

Dates are said to be out of fashion, because the learning of them is mere memory work. "Kings" are also out of fashion,

because we are told, in this democratic age, that we ought to study not kings, but peoples. None the less, it will be very helpful if the reader will resolutely commit to memory the following old-fashioned list—

William I . . .	1066–1087	
William II . .	1087–1100	
Henry I . . .	1100–1135	
Stephen . . .	1135–1154	Chapter II
Henry II . . .	1154–1189	
Richard I . . .	1189–1199	
John	1199–1216	
Henry III . .	1216–1272	Chapter III
Edward I . . .	1272–1307	
Edward II . .	1307–1327	Chapter IV
Edward III . .	1327–1377	
Richard II . .	1377–1399	
Henry IV . . .	1399–1413	
Henry V . . .	1413–1422	
Henry VI . . .	1422–1461	Chapter V
Edward IV . .	1461–1483	
Edward V . .	1483	
Richard III . .	1483–1485	

CHAPTER II

FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO MAGNA CARTA (1066–1215)

(i) *Government*

THE government of our country has passed through many changes between the Norman Conquest and the present day, but in each period it has had a character peculiarly its own and different from the governments of continental countries. We will make bold to say that it has been, on the whole, not only different, but better. The first virtue of a government is to keep order; without this virtue no other virtue is possible. The second virtue of a government is to govern in accordance with the general will of the people. This last is an ideal achievement, only possible in quite modern times and hardly attained perhaps to-day. But this much we may say. The English government in the Middle Ages achieved a far greater degree of order than any continental government, and the achievement of order made possible the beginnings of liberty. Most people are rather vague, no doubt, on the subject of Magna Carta. But we all know its name. It is as famous as Shakespeare and the battle of Waterloo; and such fame is hardly likely to be accidental or fraudulent. The story of the hundred and fifty years' government that leads straight up to Magna Carta can hardly be unimportant or uninteresting.

Order and Liberty

William had secured London and his coronation with ridiculous ease after the battle of Hastings, but there were several provincial rebellions, notably in Devonshire and Yorkshire, during the next six years, and the conquest was not complete until 1072. The chief importance of these provincial risings was that they gave

Norman aristocracy

William an excellent excuse for confiscating the estates of English landowners and establishing his Norman supporters in possession all over the country. All the bishoprics but one also passed rapidly into Norman hands, and, of course, the offices of the central administration were entirely confined to Normans. Thus a thin but, for the time being, impervious layer of foreign aristocracy was spread over the country.

These Normans were a remarkable people—Vikings christianised, and saturated in what was the foremost civilisation of the day, the civilisation of France. We may distinguish two types among them: the fighters and the administrators. To the pure fighters we have little cause to be grateful; nor had the Norman kings themselves, when once the conquest was complete. These are the feudal barons, who organise a wearisome succession of rebellions against their inconveniently orderly kings. Feudal rebellions, aiming at nothing but local baronial independence, recur again and again for just a hundred years. The last was in 1174, and its suppression marked the final victory of the administrators, with the king at their head, over the fighters. Of the administrators the greatest were the kings themselves, William I, Henry I and, though he was more Angevin than Norman, Henry II; but the kings could never have done their work if they had not found efficient and faithful servants. A modern historian describes the type for us: "cautious, plausible, deliberate, with an immense capacity for detail . . . limited in outlook, indifferent to high ideals . . . altogether a hard-headed, heavy-handed, laborious and tenacious type of man."[1]

William, in fact, succeeded, unlike all continental kings of his day, in making good his resolve that feudalism should not mean anarchy. Socially and economically all the latest improvements on the feudal system were introduced from France. That is to say, the whole organisation of society was based upon property in land. The landholder had a mass of privileges and duties

Feudalism under Control

[1] Davis, *England under the Normans and Angevins.*

attached to his landholdings, and every one who was not a landholder of some kind tended to become a serf or villein, unless he was one of the small minority who lived in a town. But although the king handed over to the feudal baron a great deal of the routine work of local government, he was determined not to let these local governors secure a position from which they could defy him. He would not live, like the Capets in France, "overshadowed by the tall trees of the feudal forest."

The king had various devices for keeping himself on top. Of course he had an immense advantage in the fact that he made a fresh start. He would not allow any duke in his dominions such as the Duke of Normandy himself was in France, or such as Godwin had been in England. Hence the famous scattering of the manors. Those who had large estates, had them in fragments scattered up and down the country. This curious arrangement may have been the work of deliberate foresight. On the other hand, it may have been simply a fortunate result of the conditions of the conquest. England was conquered piecemeal, and therefore it was distributed piecemeal among those whose support of the Conqueror entitled them to a share of the spoil. Only on the frontiers of Wales and Scotland were large earldoms tolerated, because only there were they necessary. These were, in fact, semi-independent buffer states. The king also kept an enormous extent of land in his own hand, and the right of raising the heavy land tax that had come to be called "Danegeld." He also kept in his own hands all the most important of the Norman castles soon to be built. Lastly he built up over against the feudal system of local government an over-riding "anti-feudal" or royal system, administered in each shire through nominated officials bearing the title of sheriff.

Thus the Norman kings, not easily, but by persistent effort in face of obstinate resistance, maintained order. The Anglo-Saxon chroniclers at Peterborough continued their records down to the end of Stephen's reign, and their comments on these kings, whom they regard, of course, as

foreigners and Frenchmen, are very interesting. Of William the Conqueror we read much that cannot be called praise: of his greed of money; of the great forests that he made for stag-hunting by wholesale eviction of the former cultivators; of his violence and tyranny. Yet, the chronicler admits, "he was a very wise and a great man, more honoured and more powerful than any before him. Amongst other things, the good peace that he made in this land must not be forgotten."

Domesday Book

The most amazing monument of the Conqueror's energetic administration is the famous Domesday Book of 1086. This was a complete survey of all the manors of the country, based on answers to such questions as "What is the name of your manor? Who held it under Edward the Confessor? Who holds it now? How many hides[1] does it contain? How many ploughs are there? How many inhabitants of various classes? How much woodland, meadow, pasture? What used to be its value under Edward the Confessor? What is its value now?"

The purpose of the survey was strictly practical. It was intended to tighten up the machinery for collecting feudal rent (or taxation, for the two were then the same thing). Those who had to answer these questions no doubt experienced the same irritation and the same temptation to cheat as besets the modern income-tax payer, when he fills in strikingly similar forms for the information of the tax-collector. The idea of the survey, like most of the Conqueror's ideas, came from France, but in this case, as in others, he greatly improved upon what he imitated.

The Norman Manor

The manorial system, as revealed by Domesday Book, was the framework into which society fitted itself. It is the system of

> "The rich man in his castle,
> The poor man at his gate,
> God made them high and lowly
> And ordered their estate."

[1] A hide = 120 acres. A quarter of a hide, called a virgate (30 acres) was the normal allotment of a villein for the maintenance of his family.

But though so far apart in the social scale, each was bound to the other by ties of mutual usefulness. The lord of the manor, like the Saxon thegn whose place he took, held his court, where he administered justice and settled the quarrels of his people. His people, that is to say his tenants, those who "held" from him, are commonly classified as free-tenants and villeins. But we find, in fact, such a bewildering variety of customs regulating the duties of tenants to their lords that no simple classification is of much use. One thing alone is fairly clear, and it is what we should expect. The Norman lord proved, as a rule, a harder master than his Saxon predecessor. He would stand no slackness and insubordination if he could help it, and he intended to make his manor pay. The burdens of the tenant were increased, and the law, by its definitions, brought more and more of the tenants within the definition of villeins, "bound to the estate," which they were not entitled to leave, and obliged to pay for their own virgate by contributing so many days labour on the estate of their lord.

William Rufus was a wild man, a fighter rather than an administrator, and his reign is of little interest from the point of view of government. We note, however, that the government did not break down: it merely became more tyrannical, and Rufus' low-born minister, Ranulf Flambard, seems to have accomplished prodigies of extortionate taxation that would, no doubt, have won the Conqueror's grim approval. William II

Henry I, Rufus' younger brother, was an administrator to his finger-tips. He dismissed the unpopular Flambard, who retired to his bishopric of Durham and consoled himself with building Durham cathedral— a reminder that the most worldly officials of those days were generally bishops if they did not happen to be hereditary barons or lawyers, and that the Normans had something else to give us besides orderly government. Henry married a princess of the old Saxon line, and systematically cultivated the support of the subject population as a counterpoise to his restive Norman baronage. He began his reign Henry I

by issuing a Charter, full of promises of orderly and just government, which was to be read in every shire court; and, though he broke his promises when convenient, he was praised by the Saxon chronicler towards the end of his reign as "the Lion of Justice." Under him we find a new generation of barons making their appearance, administrative barons rather than "Conquest" barons. We can also trace the beginnings of the system of itinerant justices, or justices on circuit, who go round and administer the king's law in the shire courts. "In his day no man dared harm another," says the chronicler with pardonable exaggeration. "In *his* day"—yes; but the system, like nearly all mediaeval systems, was not yet strong enough to stand the strain when there was no master-mind in control of it. None of the Conqueror's sons left male heirs surviving them. Henry left a daughter, Matilda, and the Conqueror's daughter, Adela, left a son, Stephen. The Great Council of the barons, with whom lay the choice of a successor, having promised Henry that they would choose Matilda, broke their promise and chose Stephen. Stephen was a mere fighter with no brains for government and not much even for intelligent fighting. "When the traitors perceived," says the chronicler once again, "that the king was a mild man and soft and good, then did they all wonder. They had done homage to him, but they held no faith. . . . They forced the folk to build them castles; and when the castles were finished they filled them with devils and evil men." Then Matilda came to fish for the crown in the troubled waters. The nineteen years of Stephen's reign were one long and horrible anarchy.

Stephen

Stephen's son died before him, and it was arranged that Matilda's son Henry should succeed to the inheritance that both Stephen and Matilda had claimed. Henry's father was Geoffrey of Anjou, and thus a second great French baronial family, the Angevin or Plantagenet, succeeded to the English throne. Henry II was, personally, a man of another type from the two great Norman kings—restless, eager, passionate, furiously busy,

Henry II

carrying his state papers with him into church, where he was supposed to be occupied with his religious duties. But his policy was the policy of William I and Henry I—law and order. He took up the task where Henry I had left it, and carried it much further. He established the system of Courts of Justice, both central and local, on the lines which they have, in general, followed ever since. He introduced the jury system—both the "Grand Jury," for deciding whether the case is a genuine one which ought to come before the judge, and the "Petty Jury," for giving a verdict after trial. He extended taxation by taxing towns as well as land. He established a uniform coinage. He organised a rough-and-ready system of conscription under the control, not of the feudal barons, but of the king's own appointed sheriffs. Most of these things are difficult to understand in detail, and a very general impression must suffice. The all-important point is that, by the end of his thirty-five years' reign, his system had become, unlike that of the Norman kings, an indestructible tradition. This was proved by the history of the next two reigns. Richard I and John were, in their very different ways, as unfit to rule as Stephen. But the result was not anarchy: it was Magna Carta.

Richard I was an absentee king. The first half of his reign was occupied with his Crusade; the second half with wars in France. Out of ten years he spent only a few months in England. England was his purse. He called for money, money, and ever more money; in all else English he was uninterested. However, he rendered the country a probably unintentional service by entrusting the government during his second absence to Hubert Walter, who was made Justiciar (the highest office of state at that time) and Archbishop of Canterbury. Hubert Walter was an old servant of Henry II and a very remarkable man. He was one of the least learned of our archbishops. He failed to write grammatical Latin; and when the Abbot of Caen was sent to audit his accounts, the Abbot died with suspicious suddenness after Hubert Walter had given a banquet in his honour. These are matters for regret; but the

Hubert Walter; Knights and Burgesses

services of Richard's viceroy greatly outweighed his failings, for he introduced two very important new features in Henry II's system. He called into active co-operation with the government the class known as lesser barons, or knights of the shire, or, as we should say to-day, the gentry below the ranks of the nobility. These were substantial and important, but not restive and ambitious people, and their interests were all on the side of law and order. This was the class from which, in the next century, and more particularly after the Black Death (1350), were drawn the Justices of the Peace, or country gentleman magistrates, who ultimately superseded the feudal baron and controlled local government until the nineteenth century. Secondly, he made himself the champion of the towns. It is true that he had to deal rather severely with London, but that was because London expected too much. The provincial towns found in him their great champion. He granted them charters of self-government—they paid him handsomely, of course, and the money went to his absentee master; perhaps not all of it, and hence the visit of the Abbot of Caen. It is hardly necessary to point out how important these two things are. The knights and the burgesses of the towns were the two classes that ultimately made the House of Commons.

After Richard came John, who taxed all classes as unmercifully as Richard, and had much less to show for it. In the first part of his reign he lost all his continental dominions, except a strip of coast in Gascony, which only remained English because it was less afraid of the English than of the French king. The middle part of his reign was filled with a furious and unnecessary quarrel with the most powerful of the popes, ending in John's complete submission. Then followed another invasion of France and another defeat. John had, in fact, inherited the despotic authority created for purposes of law and order by his father; he had grossly abused that authority by extortion, injustice and diabolical cruelty to such of his enemies as had fallen into his hands; and he had completely failed in all his undertakings. The loss of its continental

The failure of King John

territories weakened the power and lowered the prestige of the crown. The quarrel with the Papacy alienated the papalist section of the English Church; and, if this section was reconciled by John's submission, the prestige of the crown was lowered still further, and the Church as a whole was not inclined to forgive the ruthless pillaging to which John had subjected it during the papal quarrel. Thus the ground was prepared, and when John returned from his last unsuccessful French campaign in 1214, he found himself confronted by an unprecedented coalition. The remains of the older baronage had made their last feudal and anarchic rebellion forty years before (1174), and had been beaten. Now they rose again, but with them were the newer "administrative" baronage, who objected to the misuse and abuse of Henry II's system; and the churchmen, led by Stephen Langton—the archbishop whom Pope Innocent III had forced upon the king—and the classes to whom Hubert Walter had given political importance, the knights and the towns. John's only allies were the Pope, who unwisely backed the king who had submitted against the archbishop he had forced upon him; his horde of mostly foreign mercenaries, and a few distinguished nobles, such as William Marshal and Hubert de Burgh, who preferred the service of a bad king to rebellion. These were no match for the opposition, and John had to sign Magna Carta.

Magna Carta is a long, miscellaneous document containing sixty-three clauses. It would fill about ten pages of this book, and is, of course, written in Latin, like all official documents and most literary works of the period. It was modelled upon the Charter of Henry I (already mentioned), and this had been merely an amplified form of the coronation oath in which all kings, at their accession, undertook to do their duty. Thus it was not, strictly speaking, what we should to-day call legislation. It did not profess to make new law, but to declare what, in fact, the law already really was, and ought to be known to be. It was the work of a coalition, and its clauses reflect the aims of the divergent parties who joined in supporting it.

Magna Carta

One of these parties was the old baronage, and on their behalf Magna Carta sets down in black and white the feudal privileges which John had been infringing. Another party was the newer "administrative" baronage, the pupils of Henry II, and on behalf of these Magna Carta sets down the main principles of Henry II's system. The first of these two groups of clauses is feudal and anti-monarchical in intention; the second is monarchical and anti-feudal, but seeks to set bounds to the caprice of a particular monarch. Both are strictly conservative.

Popular opinion long held that Magna Carta established the two great principles of "no taxation without representation" and "no imprisonment without trial." But this is not so. Clause XII says: "No scutage or aid (two forms of tax) shall be levied except through the Common Council of our realm," but this Common Council is simply the council of the greater barons. There is nothing in the Charter about representation of the people. Again, Clause XXXIX, the most famous of all, runs—let us have a specimen of baronial Latin—*Nullus liber homo capiatur vel imprisonetur, aut disseisiatur, aut utlagetur, aut exuletur, aut aliquo modo destruatur . . . nisi per legale iudicium parium suorum.*[1] This seems plain enough, but there is a catch in it. *Liber homo* does not mean "free man" in the modern sense, but "freeholder" or landowner. Practically speaking, the clause means that no baron or knight shall be punished except after conviction by a jury of his own class.

Magna Carta is, in fact, anything but democratic. At that date probably three-quarters of the population were villeins, and to these the Charter has only two references. The first (Clause IV) says, "The guardian of the land of an heir who is under age shall take from the land nothing but reasonable produce, without waste of men and goods." The second (Clause XX) says that, when a villein is fined for a criminal offence in the king's courts, the fine shall not include his tools. And why not?—because that would

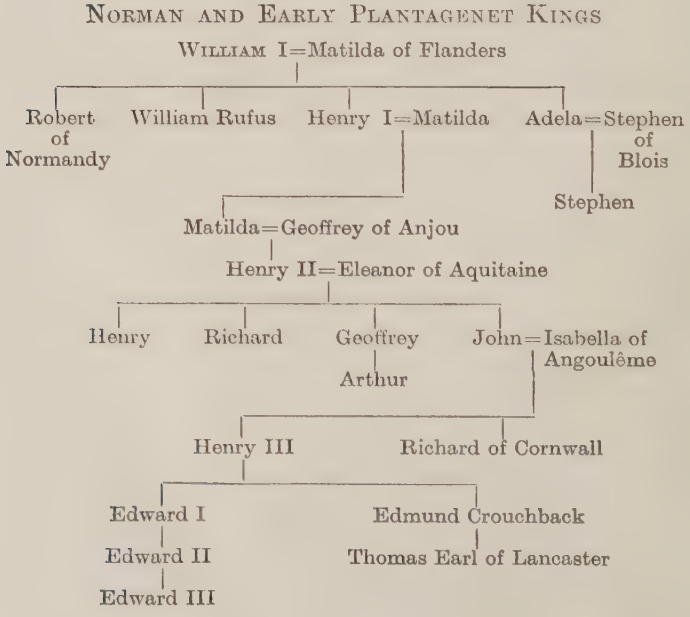
[1] No "freeman" shall be taken or imprisoned, or deprived of his estates, or outlawed, or exiled, or in any way destroyed, except by the lawful judgment of his peers (*i.e.* equals).

injure not only the villein, but his master. We may be quite sure that no sympathy for the villein was intended, for in the 1217 re-issue of the Charter the clause expressly specifies "villeins other than the king's own villeins." If the king likes to destroy the productivity of his own villeins he is, of course, welcome to do so! In fact, so far as "the People" figure in Magna Carta at all, they figure as property, which, after all, is exactly what we should expect.

Again, rights, it has been well said, are no use without remedies. What security did Magna Carta provide that its provisions would be observed? Here the remedy is desperate indeed. By Clause LXI the king formally authorises a committee of twenty-five barons who, if he fails to observe the Charter, are to be legally authorised "to distrain and distress him in all possible ways, by seizing our castles, lands, etc., till redress has been obtained." In fact, Magna Carta concludes with a threat of legalised rebellion.

It will now be plain that the merits of Magna Carta have been greatly exaggerated. But we must beware of supposing that, even so, its merits were few or small. Its *first* merit is its length and elaboration. It was far the most complete and comprehensive statement of "rights" yet acknowledged, and it thus helped, more than any other document, to establish the principle of the rule of law as superior to the rule of king and barons alike. *Secondly*, the Magna Carta coalition marks the final conversion of the old feudal baronage and their alliance with the knights and the towns. Magna Carta did not found Parliament, but the Magna Carta coalition, which is, in fact, a coalition of "Lords and Commons," was the grouping of classes which alone made Parliament possible and workable. *Thirdly*, the signing of Magna Carta presents a dramatic spectacle of a bad king brought to his knees by the orderly co-operation of his outraged subjects. As such, its moral value as a warning and an example was immense. In fact, we find that Magna Carta is permanently important, not on account of the details of its clauses but because it was a document drawn up by a coalition and signed, under compulsion, by a king.

Its fame lasted throughout the Middle Ages, and the Charter, with various additions, was produced and signed again and again. Under the popular Tudor despotism it was so completely forgotten that Shakespeare could write a play on the whole reign of King John without mentioning it. It was rediscovered by Sir Edward Coke, the great lawyer of the parliamentary opposition to James I, and Coke is mainly responsible for the mythical views of the contents of the Charter which remained current for the next two hundred years. In fact, the Puritan opposition to the Stuarts read into Magna Carta all their own ideals and imagined that they too were "conservatives," fighting to restore the liberties granted by King John. Only in quite modern times has the true history of Magna Carta been re-discovered.



(ii) *Church and State*

The two greatest men of the eleventh century were almost exact contemporaries. William the Conqueror died in 1087 and Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) in 1085. The former had laid the foundations of the strongest national government of the Middle Ages; the latter had asserted the claim of the Papacy to give its orders to the whole western Church, in defiance of "the princes of this world." He had excommunicated the German King Henry IV, who bore the title of Holy Roman Emperor, and compelled him to come to Italy and plead for the Pope's forgiveness at the Castle of Canossa. That event at Canossa, which fell in the middle of the reign of William the Conqueror, was one of those great events that sets the tone of a whole epoch. The successor of Augustus had done penance to the successor of St. Peter.

King and Pope

The forces set going by William the Conqueror and Gregory VII were bound to clash, and the conflicts of national State and supernational Church continued, in one form and another, for four and a half centuries, until Henry VIII completely severed the English Church from the Papacy. After the Reformation the problems of the relations of Church and State in England assumed a different character, but they continued to be difficult problems, and it is only in quite recent times that we are coming to realise that Churches are voluntary societies with which the State as such has no concern.

While we review the conflicts of Church and State in the Middle Ages, we should bear in mind all the time that both had right on their side. It was reasonable that, in the interests of law and order, the kings should claim authority over all their subjects, whether lay or clerical. But it was also reasonable that the Church, which ever since the fall of the Roman Empire had been the greatest force making for civilisation in Christendom, should claim the right to protect its ministers from the tyrannies and extortions to which secular rulers were only too much inclined to subject them.

If we are to see this matter aright we must put out of our minds altogether such notions of Church and State as we owe to twentieth-century experience. The modern State is a democracy, based on the more or less intelligent will of a more or less educated people. The modern Church of England is a voluntary society for purely religious purposes, or rather, it is one among many Churches or sects, each including only a small fraction of the population. But the mediaeval "State" was simply the king, his officials and his feudal barons, and the mediaeval "Church" was a great international organisation, with an almost complete monopoly of learning and education, owning vast estates, and administering in its own courts some of the most important departments of law, such as the law of marriage. "The people," so far as they had any opinion on the matter at all, would be quite as often on the side of the Church as of the State. Both State and Church were, until long after the Norman Conquest, "foreign" institutions, but the Church devoted itself far more than the State to the interests of the poor. The relief of poverty was a Church question, not a State question; and the Church was, compared with the State, almost democratic. Many a poor lad with exceptional gifts rose from the ranks to high office by the ladder of Church preferment. Popes and bishops were often "self-made men," whereas kings and nobles owed their power to inheritance.

The Normans were, deservedly, the favourites of the Papacy, for they had shown themselves, even before the Conquest, the most energetic promoters of the revival of religion which characterised the eleventh century, and found its most sensational expression in the Crusades. Norman architecture alone is enough to remind us that there was a strong element of religious idealism in the Norman character. The Anglo-Saxon Church had long been in a very unsatisfactory state. Its bishops and priests were for the most part ignorant, slack and given to enjoying themselves: "pot-bellied equanimity" (to quote an old phrase of Carlyle's) was their

Church under William I

outstanding characteristic. Thus the Norman Conquest was, among other things, a kind of crusade. William undertook to set in order and bring up to date a disorderly and backward province of the Church, and he kept his promise. Learning returned; the standard of Latin prose rose markedly; monasteries were founded and cathedrals built. Church assemblies were regularly held, and William often presided at them himself. The average Norman bishop was hardly a great saint, but he was "a good spiritual drill sergeant," and a genuine hard worker according to his lights.

The two chief items in papal policy were celibacy of the clergy and the prohibition of lay investitures, *i.e.* the appointment of ecclesiastics by the crown or other secular authorities; but neither of these was strongly pressed so long as William ruled, and Gregory seems to have accepted without demur William's emphatic refusal to do homage to the Pope for his kingdom. In fact, Gregory was fully occupied with his quarrel with the Holy Roman Emperor. William was doing the work of the Church well, and it would be a mistake to quarrel with him. Thus the Conqueror's reign was a time of truce. His archbishop, Lanfranc, sided with the king rather than the Pope. The most important innovation of the reign was the separation of Church courts of justice from lay courts. In Anglo-Saxon times the bishop and the sheriff had administered justice together in the shire court. Henceforth each had his own court. The bishop (or his archdeacon) administered the Canon Law of the Church, and his jurisdiction embraced all that pertained to the ruling of souls (*quod pertinet ad regimen animarum*). The trouble that would arise from the vagueness of this definition was not foreseen.

William II and Anselm

If William the Conqueror was a kind of Crusader, William Rufus was merely a ruffian, and a blasphemous ruffian too. He told an aged bishop that he had received nothing but evil at the hand of God, and God should get no good from him. He hit upon the device of keeping ecclesiastical offices vacant and taking

their incomes for his own use. Thus the archbishopric of Canterbury was left vacant for four years (1089–1093), until a serious illness reminded Rufus of the terrors of hell and prompted him to appoint Anselm to that office. Anselm was already a very old man. He was an Italian, born at Aosta, under the shadow of the Alps, and he had been for many years an abbot in Normandy. He was one of the greatest saints and scholars of the Middle Ages, and his theological writings have been recognised as a permanently valuable contribution to religious thought. But it may be that he was hardly suited to the difficult task of restoring the concord between Church and State in England. The Papacy was now determined to assert in England the policy of prohibiting lay investiture, which it had refrained from pressing on William I. The archbishopric of Anselm covers the last years of Rufus and the first years of Henry I. It was a period of constant conflict, and Anselm lived most of the time an exile in Normandy.

At last Pope Paschal II induced Henry to come to terms by excommunicating the bishops who supported him, and a compromise was accepted by both parties in 1106. The king abandoned his claim to invest bishops with the ring and staff, the spiritual symbols of their office; but it was agreed that the bishops should do homage to him for the temporalities attaching to their sees, that is to say, for the estates from which they drew their incomes. Like so many compromises, it secured peace by ignoring the real issue, namely, who should select the bishops. Practically the control remained with the king, though popes continued from time to time to exercise an effective veto. Sixteen years later (1122) the Papacy and the Empire made a compromise (the Concordat of Worms) on the same terms.

The Compromise under Henry I

On the question of celibacy Henry achieved very much the same degree of success by similar means. In 1127 the bishops demanded royal sanction for a Canon (*i.e.* Church statute) under which the wives of priests, if they refused to separate from their husbands, should be reduced to slavery.

Henry assented, but his lawyers discovered means of evading the Canon. "So all went home," says a Norman chronicler, "and the decrees stood for naught: all held their wives, by the king's leave, as they had done before." The strength of the Church was not in the letter of its law, but in the spirit of devotion it kindled in its members. This spirit of devotion was steadily growing throughout the century after the Conquest.

The reign of Stephen has an importance all its own in the history of the Church; for the State entirely collapsed, whereas the Church stood intact, carried on its own work, and made formidable inroads upon what might be regarded as the sphere of the State. Stephen owed his accession largely to the Church, and recklessly granted away on paper every claim of the Church against the State. Then the Church quarrelled with Stephen and threw its weight effectively on to the side of Matilda. Four times in the course of the reign the Church decided the balance of power between the two candidates. At the same time the Church courts vastly extended their sphere of operations, for the simple reason that the State courts were continually out of action.

The Church under Stephen

Thus Henry II had to recover for the State the ground that had been lost under his predecessor, and it was with this end in view that, when the archbishopric fell vacant in 1162, he appointed to it his intimate friend and Chancellor, Thomas Becket. Becket was the son of a Norman landowner who had settled in London and taken to trade. He entered the Church, and was archdeacon of Canterbury when Henry promoted him to the Chancellorship at his accession. Archdeacons were important people in the Middle Ages. They were, in fact, the business-managers of their respective bishops. On them fell most of the arduous and, in popular opinion, the "dirty work" of the Church—so dirty that the question "whether an archdeacon could be saved" was a favourite topic of debate among the irreverent. Becket's character is perhaps more familiar to us than that of any other archbishop,

Henry II and Becket

mediaeval or modern. He was not a prudent statesman like Lanfranc, nor a great saint and scholar like Anselm, but he was an enthusiastic champion of each of the causes he served —first the Church, then the State, and then the Church again; he was also a very dexterous politician, a perfectly sincere Christian of the "hair-shirt" variety, and a very brave man. Of course, Henry made the mistake of his life in appointing him archbishop. It was the typical mistake of an irreligious statesman who simply could not comprehend the power of the ideals of Hildebrand over such a mind as Becket's, in which discretion was certainly not the better part of valour.

Henry's case against the Church courts as Stephen's reign had left them was fourfold. First, they encroached on the business of the courts of the Crown, and consequently on the royal revenues; for justice, in the Middle Ages, was a recognised source of profit. Secondly they promoted crime by the insufficiency of their penalties. The courts claimed that all "criminous clerks" came within their jurisdiction, and a "criminous clerk" who committed a murder was very well content that this should be so, seeing that he got off with a fine and a penance. Thirdly, they claimed jurisdiction in all civil actions involving the Church as a litigant—cases of property, for example, in which an abbey was one of the parties. In such cases, it was said, the Church courts were not impartial (nor, one may reply, were the State courts). Fourthly, appeals from the Church courts were not to the king's court, but to Rome.

Church Courts

It was impossible for Henry to deal with this subject by a royal edict, or assize (what we should call "legislation"), for to do so would beg the fundamental question in dispute: did the king's authority extend over the Church courts? So he had recourse to the same device as was afterwards used by the barons in Magna Carta. He appealed to the "ancient customs of the realm." In the Middle Ages every one was a conservative, inasmuch as every one accepted the principle "what ought to be is what used to be." The Constitutions of Clarendon (1164) set forth the king's version

of the "ancient customs" in this matter. Becket's answer amounted to no more and no less than "Touch not the Lord's anointed": the Church was above "ancient customs." A year of complicated quarrelling ensued. The bishops and barons in the main supported the king. Becket fled to France, and proceeded to excommunicate his enemies, other than the king, with the approval of Pope Alexander III (1166).

But Alexander was himself an exile in France, at war with the great Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, who had established a rival pope in Rome. He did not wish to add Henry II to his list of enemies. So a papal extinguisher was placed on Becket's activities, and a complete deadlock ensued for the next four years. The king would not abandon, nor the archbishop approve, the Constitutions of Clarendon. Becket remained abroad.

The end of the story is well known. In 1170 Henry II, in accordance with a practice common on the Continent, had his eldest son, Henry, crowned as his colleague and successor. Becket protested that he alone, and not any other bishops, had the right to perform the ceremony, and the Pope supported him once again. Henry sought an interview, after which Becket was allowed to return to England on a general assumption that byegones should be treated as byegones. Becket celebrated his return by excommunicating the bishops who had performed the coronation. Henry lost his temper and made a rash remark the precise wording of which is uncertain. Four of those who heard it felt themselves justified in crossing to Canterbury and murdering the archbishop in his own cathedral.

The martyrdom of Becket

It is generally assumed that Becket won a final and decisive victory for his cause by his martyrdom. Miracles were worked at his tomb, and his shrine became the most popular goal of pilgrimage in England, and one of the greatest in all western Europe. The spectacular penance performed by Henry himself at the time of the last great feudal rebellion of 1173–4 is well

Another compromise

remembered. But it is not so well remembered that before that date, in 1172, Henry had been officially reconciled to the Church and had secured a settlement of the questions at issue which was a compromise rather than a surrender. The claim to bring criminous clerks before the lay courts he had to abandon, and the abuses of this system lasted till the Reformation; but civil actions relating to property were brought under royal jurisdiction, and the archbishops of the next forty years were on the whole good friends to the Crown.

This alliance of the Church and State was rudely broken off by the folly of King John. Archbishop Hubert Walter (whose activities have been dealt with in the previous section) died in 1205, and the canons of Canterbury, knowing that John intended to force upon them an undesirable nominee in the person of John de Gray, hastily elected their own sub-prior, Reginald, and despatched him to seek confirmation of his appointment from the Pope. It was an open question whether the right of election, apart from the king's authority in the matter, lay with the canons or with the bishops of the province of Canterbury; and the canons, repenting of their rashness, joined with the bishops in electing John de Gray. Innocent III, the most powerful of all the popes, set aside both candidates and appointed Stephen Langton, a distinguished English Cardinal residing in Rome. John refused to accept him or to allow him to land in the country.

John and Innocent III

Thereupon Innocent laid England under an Interdict (1208). The life of the Church was suspended; the dead were buried in unconsecrated ground, and the Mass could only be celebrated in the churchyards. In the next year John was excommunicated. The papal thunderbolts, it must be admitted, proved ineffective. There was little or no definitely anti-papal feeling in the country, but there was a general feeling that the Pope had exceeded his powers, and John's authority was not seriously shaken. Had he been a wiser man he might have turned the situation to good account; but he was, like Rufus, a violent and passionate barbarian.

Being unable to punish the Pope, he wreaked his vengeance on his own churchmen, with whom he had no reasonable ground of quarrel. In 1213 Innocent launched his finally effective weapon. England had already once been conquered from France. Why should it not be conquered again? Philip Augustus, the first really powerful king of the Capet line, was authorised to invade England. John submitted, and the invasion was abandoned.

Now for the first time the king of England had done homage to the Pope, and held his kingdom as a fief of the Papal See. Thus John became the protégé of the Papacy. Innocent supported him in the matter of Magna Carta, absolved him from his oath to observe it, and excommunicated the Charter barons, even suspending from office Archbishop Langton, whom he had been at such pains to promote to his archbishopric. On the other hand, the Church in England had not so easily forgiven John, and, led by Langton, had ranged itself with the Charter barons. The cleavage, always visible, between the interests and aims of the Papacy and the interests and aims of the Church in England, is one of the features of the thirteenth century (see next chapter). Only in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the Church, by its increasing worldliness, lost its hold over the best of the English laity, did it once again become "Roman" rather than "Anglican" in its sympathies.

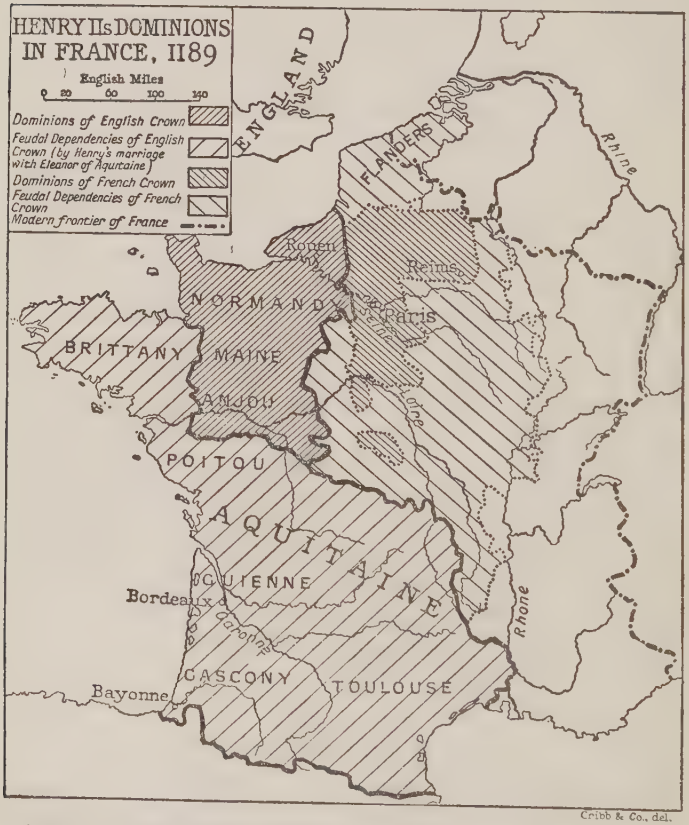
Results of John's submission

(iii) *France and Ireland*

During almost the whole of the period from the Norman Conquest to Magna Carta the kings of England were also dukes of one or more of the great feudal provinces into which France was then divided. To think of these duchies as in any sense "English possessions" would be, of course, absurd: they were possessions of the foreign kings, who had conquered England. All the Normans and early Plantagenet kings devoted a good deal of time and energy to campaigning in France, in wars with

English Kings in France

the French kings, with neighbouring dukes, and with their own vassals. In this there may have been some loss to



Note. (i) The smallness of the dominions governed directly by the French crown.

(ii) The frontier of France in 1189 contains a small piece of what is now Belgium, but, apart from this, large tracts of what is now eastern France were then dependencies of the "Roman" (*i.e.* German) Empire.

England, but there was also gain, for the French provinces still represented a higher standard of civilisation than

England, and the connection established by identity of rulers was for the advantage of the more backward country.

William the Conqueror was fatally injured at the siege of Mantes and buried at Caen. The Norman duchy passed to his eldest son, Robert, and much warfare followed between him and his two younger brothers, Rufus and Henry, ending, so far as the unfortunate Robert was concerned, with the battle of Tinchebrai (1106), where Robert was defeated and captured. Henry brought him to England and kept him locked up at Cardiff for the remainder of his life. Thus Normandy was reannexed to the English crown.

Henry II inherited not only Normandy, with Maine and Brittany through his mother, but also Anjou through his father, and by his marriage with Eleanor of Aquitaine he acquired a vast territory stretching from the Loire to the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean. It was, in fact, far more than any mediaeval king could effectively control. In the latter part of his reign he tried to make use of his four sons, Henry, Richard, Geoffrey and John, as rulers in his continental provinces; but they were wild young men, and turned against their father, the family quarrels of the Plantagenets being skilfully encouraged by Philip Augustus, king of France (1180–1223). After Henry II's death Richard and Philip went on Crusade to the Holy Land; but Philip was a statesman rather than a crusader, and soon returned to his proper work of uniting the provinces of France under a strong monarchy. Richard returned after him and devoted all his last years to defending the Plantagenet possessions. John succeeded to his task. John's claim was disputed in Anjou and Brittany by Arthur, the son of the Geoffrey who had been Richard's younger and John's elder brother. John captured Arthur and had him put to death, but he could not withstand Philip. By 1204 the whole of the continental dominions had been lost except a strip of coastland in Gascony, with the towns of Bordeaux and Bayonne, and over this the English king exercised little real authority.

The empire of Henry II

Henceforth for more than a hundred years the English

kings were rulers of England and of little else. The baronage also lost such continental estates as still belonged to them, and began to think of themselves as leaders of the English people.

Henry II's reign, important for so many different reasons, saw the beginning of the conquest of Ireland, beginnings which were as haphazard and ill-considered as most of the later relations between the two countries. In 1166 a certain Diarmait mac Marchadha, prince of Hui Cinnsellaigh (or, if you prefer, Dermid, prince of Leinster), being driven from his dominions, came to Henry II and offered his allegiance on condition of being restored. Henry refused, but gave him permission to seek help from his Welsh and English subjects. Several barons of the Welsh border were quite ready for the adventure, the chief among them being Richard of Clare, surnamed Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke. He stipulated for the hand of Diarmait's daughter and the succession to his princedom, and raised a small but sufficient force, who were paid partly in promises and partly in cash borrowed from the Jews of Gloucester.

Ireland

Strongbow crossed in 1170, and quickly captured Waterford and Dublin, which at that date were held by Danish colonists who had settled there in the time of the Viking raids. It seemed as if all Ireland would soon be at his feet. Henry was surprised and displeased. He had no desire to see a Richard the Conqueror establish himself in Ireland and play towards him the part that William the Conqueror and his descendants were playing towards the king of France. In 1171 he crossed over to Ireland himself to take the business into his own hands. Strongbow was reduced to order; but Henry only spent six months in Ireland, being recalled to meet the papal legates who had come to negotiate his reconciliation with the Church after the murder of Becket. His only further contribution to the Irish question was to send thither as "Lord of Ireland" in 1185 his favourite son John, who had to be quickly recalled on account of his gross incompetence and bad manners.

Thus was founded what came to be known as the Irish Pale. Its rulers were the descendants of Norman barons, who quickly became indistinguishable from the Irish chieftains with whose families they intermarried. The real conquest of Ireland was not completed until the end of the reign of Elizabeth, more than four hundred years later.

The relations of the kings of this period with Scotland and Wales were indecisive in character and may be left for later chapters.

(iv) *The Crusades*

The Crusades exercised remarkably little influence upon British history. Even Richard I's Crusade was a personal exploit of the least English of our Kings rather than an event of British history. None the less, the Crusades form so romantic and characteristic an aspect of the Middle Ages that a brief digression from British affairs may perhaps be allowed. Let us go back to the beginning of the story.

The Early Christian Church grew up within the Roman Empire, and Jerusalem remained within the dominions of the Emperor who ruled at Constantinople until 637, when it was conquered by Arabs inspired by the newly-founded religion of Mohammed. But Islam is not on principle an intolerant faith, and the conquerors placed no difficulty in the way of Christian pilgrims, who continued to visit the Holy Places in steadily increasing numbers. For the Church had given its official encouragement to pilgrimage, whether to Jerusalem or some other shrine of the faith, by making it a part of its system of penances, whereby members of the Church made amends for their sins, escaped the dreaded penalty of excommunication, or obtained merit in God's eyes. Pilgrimage was a popular and agreeable form of penance, combining spiritual benefits with the excitements of travel. The characters in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* are pilgrims travelling to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canter-

bury. (Their spirit is that of holiday-makers rather than penitents, but Chaucer belongs to a much later, and less religious, age.) In 1064, for example, seven thousand pilgrims, including a German archbishop, visited Jerusalem.

But about the time of Hildebrand two events took place which made pilgrimages from the West increasingly difficult. In 1054 occurred the final quarrel and formal separation between the western or Catholic (Roman) and the eastern or Orthodox (Greek) Church, and thenceforth the officials of the Eastern Empire, through which those who went by the land route had to pass, and the priests of the Greek Church, who guarded, under Arab permission, the Holy Places, were often unfriendly to pilgrims. Then, in 1071, the Seljukian Turks [1] conquered Jerusalem from the Arabs, and the lot of pilgrims became still more unpleasant. In 1076 the Seljukian Turks overran most of the Greek province of Asia Minor, and the Emperor appealed for support against them to Gregory VII. Gregory formed schemes, not for a Crusade in the narrower sense but for a great expedition of the West to succour the Eastern Empire. By this means he hoped to bring about a reunion of eastern and western Churches under the Papacy. But nothing came of it. The Crusade as actually launched by his successor, Urban II, made straight for Jerusalem and, far from helping the Emperor, became involved in quarrels with him. It is possible that Gregory's plan was the more statesmanlike; still, no appeal for the succour of Constantinople could have struck the chord of religious enthusiasm which launched western Christendom on Jerusalem in frontal attack.

The Eastern Empire and the Seljukian Turks

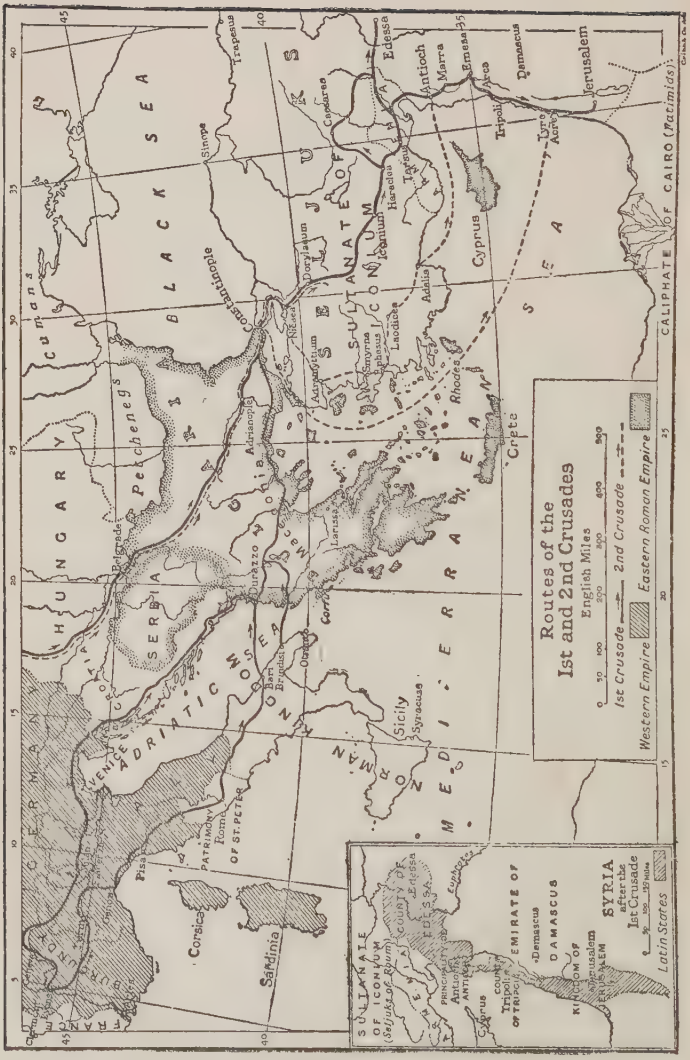
The crusading movement has many aspects, some religious and some purely secular. (i) We may regard it as part of the age-long struggle between East and West which was as old as the Persian Wars of Greece, or, perhaps, as old as the siege of Troy. From this point of view the crusades are a counter-attack in reply

Aspects of the Crusades

[1] Not to be confused with the Ottoman Turks of modern Turkey, who did not appear till nearly three centuries later.

to the great Oriental offensive of Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries—the offensive which was checked at Tours by Charles Martel. From this standpoint the crusades are part of the same movement as the Norman conquest of Saracen Sicily, and the forward movement of the Christians of Spain under the Cid Campeador and other champions. (ii) They may also be viewed as a continuation or revival of the old Viking spirit of adventurous roving—as Christianised Viking expeditions under papal patronage. It is notable that the Normans of Sicily and of Normandy played a leading part in the first crusade. (iii) Or we may see in the crusades the foreign policy of the new imperial Papacy. They were a great supernational movement, just as the Papacy was a great supernational institution. It was natural that kings should at first stand aloof from them. No kings went on the first and greatest crusade. Sullenly they watched the Pope playing the part of Pied Piper, and leading off the best and bravest of their subjects on a cause they could not openly oppose. Later they themselves fell in with the movement. The second and third crusades are led by kings and emperors. (iv) Again, the crusades have an important commercial aspect. The rising Italian seaports, Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, wanted to open up trade with the East, and a Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem stretching from the port of Joppa to the Red Sea furnished them with just the sort of "Suez Canal" that they required. Indeed it may be said that the spirit of adventure and religious enthusiasm, though it conquered Jerusalem, could not have held it for nearly a hundred years, but for the "sinews of war" supplied by these traders for their own commercial purposes.

(v) But it was religious enthusiasm which gave the crusades their splendid and romantic character. A crusade may be defined simply as an armed pilgrimage. It was a penance affording not only the gentle pleasures of travel but also the fiercer delights of battle with God's enemies. If the crusader fell in battle, he not only shared in the glory common to all soldiers who give their lives for a cause: he might be supposed to have secured thereby a certainty


Routes of the
Ist and 2nd Crusades
English Miles
0 50 100 200 300 400 500
1st Crusade
2nd Crusade
Western Empire
Eastern Roman Empire
SYRIA
after the
Ist Crusade
Latin States
SULTANATE OF ICONIUM (Seljuks of Rum)
COUNTY OF EDESSA
EMIRATE OF DAMASCUS
KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM
PRINCIPALITY OF ANTIOCH
COUNTY OF TRIPOLI
Cyprus
Tripoli
Tyre
Acre
Jerusalem
Damascus
Emesa
Marra
Antioch
Edessa
Tarsus
Haracleia
Iconium
Adalia
Laodicea
Smyrna
Ephesus
Rhodes
Crete
Cyprus
Sicily
Syracuse
Corsica
Sardinia
Corfu
Durazzo
Bari
Brindisi
Otranto
Larissa
Adrianople
Nicaea
Dorylaeum
Adrianopolis
Constantinople
Sinope
Trapezus
Caesarea
Cumans
Pecchenegs
Belgrade
Pisa
Rome
PATRIMONY OF ST. PETER
VENICE
CROATIA
SERBIA
HUNGARY
GERMANY
FRANCE
BURGUNDY
BLACK SEA
SELJUKS
SULTANATE OF ICONIUM
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ADRIATIC SEA
NORMAN KINGDOM
CALIPHATE OF CAIRO (Fatimids)

of eternal glory in heaven. It is easy to see, however, that this is not an essentially Christian idea. On the contrary, it is a notion borrowed from the religion of those whom the crusades were attacking. The crusades are a Christian application of the Moslem idea of the *Jehad* or Holy War—a fighting of the enemy with his own weapons. It is also easy to see that though the religious motive of many crusaders might be pure and noble, that of many others would be basely superstitious. Many ruffians took the cross and carried their ruffianism with them to the Holy Land.

Urban preached his great crusading sermon (copies of which still survive) at Clermont on 26 November 1095. He was answered by eager cries of *Deus vult*. Many thousands took the cross. Urban appointed Bishop Adhemar of Puy as leader of the expedition and fixed a general rendezvous of the crusaders at Constantinople in the following summer. Before the official crusade got under weigh, however, a popular movement, known as the People's Crusade, revealed at once the enthusiasm and the brutality of the age. Ignorant preachers such as Peter the Hermit set forth from Clermont and gathered round themselves vast crowds of vagabonds and fanatics. The call of Jerusalem acted upon them like strong drink. Some fell upon the Jews and are said to have massacred ten thousand in the valley of the Rhine. Two great bands reached Constantinople. The Emperor, Alexius Comnenus, shipped them across the straits to preserve the peace of his own capital, and they were at once annihilated by the Turkish forces.

The "People's Crusade"

Meanwhile the official crusaders gathered at Constantinople. Among the leaders were Godfrey of Bouillon and his brother Baldwin of Flanders, who came through Hungary; Raymund of Toulouse, and Bohemund the Sicilian Norman, who was to prove himself the ablest and the most worldly of the adventurers. The total number of the host may have been 150,000. Alexius insisted that the crusaders should do homage to

The official Crusade

him in advance for any lands which they might conquer, and the crusaders reluctantly consented. In May 1097 they crossed the Bosporus and marched across Asia Minor to Tarsus by a route not very different from that taken by Alexander the Great thirteen hundred and thirty years before. Their first victory over the Seljuks at Dorylaeum may be compared with Alexander's first victory over the Persians on the Granīcus. Having crossed Asia Minor they turned south, and the crusaders' long siege of Antioch roughly corresponds, again, with Alexander's siege of Tyre.

Bohemund was the hero of the capture of Antioch, and here he decided to stay and create a principality for himself: Jerusalem was of no interest to him. After some civil war between the crusaders themselves, the rest, other than Bohemund and his followers, moved southwards down the coast under Raymund of Toulouse. Less than half way to Jerusalem, however, Raymund called a halt, for he intended to follow Bohemund's example and carve out a kingdom for himself at Tripolis. At this point the genuine crusaders protested, and they found a leader in Godfrey de Bouillon, who thus became, for all later ages, the hero of the crusade. Raymund consented to leave Tripolis for the time being and to march on Jerusalem, which was stormed and captured in July 1099. A terrible slaughter followed, more worthy of the fierce religion of the Book of Joshua than of the faith of Christ. But it was no doubt the work of men terribly sincere. "At nightfall, sobbing for excess of joy, they came at last to the Church of the Sepulchre, and put their bloodstained hands together in prayer."

Antioch, Tripolis, and Jerusalem

It was not clear at first how the new kingdom was to be governed. Bishop Adhemar, the official leader nominated by the Pope, had died. If there was to be a king, Godfrey de Bouillon was the obvious choice. Only one year of life was in store for him, and during that period, though he did not accept the kingly title, he played the kingly part, and successfully repelled an attack from Egypt. After his death his brother Baldwin was consecrated as king by the newly-

appointed Patriarch[1] of Jerusalem, on Christmas Day, 1100.

The first Crusade established a Christian kingdom of Jerusalem in 1100, which lasted eighty-seven years. But it can hardly be called a successful experiment. The adventurous qualities which made a good crusader were by no means the qualities most useful in the difficult task of establishing orderly government in an oriental colony. From the beginning anarchy and brutality, the worst vices of feudalism, were conspicuous, and the kings proved quite unable to control their vassals. In all periods, not least in our own, it has proved difficult for white races to preserve their moral standards in their dealings with races they regard as inferior, and the difficulty was greatly increased when the "inferior" was also officially an "infidel." The Crusaders found even in their religion excuses for all kinds of wickedness. "Islam," writes a modern historian, "might have endured a kingdom of Christians: it could not endure a kingdom of brigands." In the words of a contemporary, "the crusaders forsook God before God forsook them."

The Kingdom of Jerusalem

A second Crusade (1147), though led by a Holy Roman Emperor and a king of France, Louis VII, proved an embarrassment rather than a help. A strong Mohammedan power arose at Mosul on the Euphrates and conquered Egypt, and Saladin, its brilliant ruler, destroyed the kingdom of Jerusalem in 1187.

The catastrophe made an impression such as perhaps no single piece of news had ever made in Europe before. The clergy put on sackcloth; the laity went into mourning; Henry II, Richard and Philip suspended their hostilities and took the crusader's vow. A special tax was imposed in England called the Saladin tithe, which is notable as the first tax on personal property, as distinct from land. Each individual had to assess his own contribution, and those whose assessments were

The fall of Jerusalem

[1] Patriarch is a title used in the eastern church and corresponds roughly to Archbishop.

inadequate had their contribution reassessed for them by a jury of their neighbours. None the less, Henry and Richard were again at war before the year was out. On the English people themselves the news from Jerusalem produced results wholly undesirable: there were massacres of Jews in London, Norwich, York and elsewhere.

Richard set forth on his Crusade in 1190, with about forty English ships and perhaps 8000 men, mostly French. There were delays and sundry adventures in Sicily and Cyprus. When Richard joined his fellow-crusaders in the Holy Land they were engaged upon the siege of Acre. He was a fine soldier as well as a recklessly gallant fighter, and Acre fell before him, but that was practically all he achieved. The crusaders marched painfully along the coast to Jaffa, winning a hard-fought battle at Arsuf. Twice they advanced towards Jerusalem, but even to undertake the siege of a city so well fortified by nature was out of the question; and if by a miracle they had taken it, they would themselves have been quickly starved out within their prize. The first Crusade had succeeded because the Moslem world had been divided and unprepared. Now Egypt and Mesopotamia were ruled by one of the ablest and most popular of Oriental despots. The Crusaders' camp was honeycombed with faction. Some went home, like Philip of France; some, like Conrad of Montferrat, entered into communication with the enemy. Richard's supplies were exhausted, and his health broken down by the climate. He negotiated a truce which left Acre and other points on the coast in Christian hands, and started for home, sixteen months after his arrival (June 1191—October 1192). On his way home through Germany he was arrested and held for ransom by Leopold of Austria, one of the Crusaders with whom he had quarrelled in Palestine. So England, which had paid heavily to send him off, had to pay a second time to get him home again.

The Third Crusade

But the Crusades were by no means over. Innocent III, the Pope of John's reign, was determined to succeed where the kings of France and England had failed, and gathered

a great crusading host in 1202, which, however, was diverted by the Venetians, who financed it, to Constantinople, where it overthrew the Greek and established for fifty years a "Latin" empire. This was the fourth Crusade, which never touched the Holy Land at all. The fifth Crusade was an unsuccessful expedition to Egypt. The sixth succeeded in re-establishing for seventeen years (1227–1244) a Christian kingdom in Jerusalem, but it was a most "irreligious" affair, for its author was the arch-enemy of the Papacy, the brilliant but blasphemous Emperor Frederick II, who was excommunicated by the Pope as soon as he started. The seventh and eighth Crusades (1248 and 1270) were undertaken by the saintly Louis IX of France. They achieved nothing. Prince Edward, afterwards Edward I of England, played a brilliant part in the second of these expeditions. In fact he was on his way home from Palestine when he received the news that Henry III was dead and that he was king of England.

Later Crusades

Meantime the term "Crusade" had received a vast extension of meaning. The religious benefits of crusading could be secured elsewhere than in the cause of the Holy Sepulchre. It became a "Crusade" to fight the heathen Slavs of eastern Europe; to fight the heretic Albigensians of southern France; to fight against the Emperor Frederick II; in fact, to embark on any cause, holy or unholy, which it suited the Papacy to approve. Indeed papal approval itself was dispensed with. At the battle of Lewes (1264), the soldiers of Simon de Montfort sewed white crosses on their coats in token that they believed their cause was just, and thus made themselves crusaders in their own eyes. A century later (1383) we find an unworthy pope conferring the title of crusade upon one of the least successful English campaigns of the Hundred Years' War, and being denounced therefor by the reformer Wycliffe.

Metaphorical "Crusades"

In fact, religious enthusiasm is as subject to changes of fashion as any other form of human activity. By the end of the period covered by this chapter, religious energy was

ebbing from the Crusades and was about to find other channels. St. Francis of Assisi and St. Dominic were founding the brotherhoods which sought to follow Christ, not by fighting His battles with the sword, but by assuming His poverty and imitating His life of service to the poor.

CHAPTER III

THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY (1215–1297)

(i) *From Magna Carta to Parliament*

THE word Parliament means, by derivation, simply a speaking or debating assembly. In the thirteenth century the word was already coming into use to denote the Great Council of Barons before the institution we call Parliament had any existence. For by Parliament we mean not merely a House of Lords, such as the Great Council, in fact, was, but also a House of Commons, consisting of elected representatives, elected not necessarily by the whole people (for that is very modern), but at any rate by certain classes or sections of the people. It will be convenient to use the word parliament in this sense alone, and to ignore the fact that thirteenth-century people had already begun to use the name for other purposes.

The English monarchy had never been in theory a despotism. Mediaeval kings never talked about their "divine right," for "divine right" belonged to the Pope, and could only reasonably be claimed by kings after the Pope's power had been entirely repudiated. The old Saxon kings had ruled in a kind of partnership with their Witan or Council of Wise Men, and after the Norman Conquest the powers of the Witan passed to the Great Council of Barons. This Great Council nominated the king when the succession was open to doubt, preferring, for example, William Rufus to his elder brother Robert, Stephen to Matilda, and John to his nephew Arthur; the king then took an oath to the Great Council at his coronation, and always issued his laws and ordinances "with the counsel and con-

"Limited monarchy"

sent" of his Council. Magna Carta insisted upon, but in no respect altered, this arrangement. The government may, in fact, be likened to a firm with two partners. We have now to see how two new partners came to join the firm, the knights of the shire and the burgesses of the towns, afterwards known as county members and borough members of the House of Commons. Briefly, we may say that the new partners were called in as a result of the quarrels of the old partners.

The rebellion of the Charter barons

The signing of Magna Carta marked the beginning rather than the end of the baronial rebellion. Before John signed the Charter he had already begged Innocent III to absolve him from the oath he might be compelled to take, adding a promise (which may or may not have deceived the Pope) that he would go on a Crusade. So Innocent annulled the Charter. The barons declared war and offered the crown to Louis the Dauphin of France, who accepted it and came over with an army to England. Then John, most fortunately, died, leaving a boy of nine as his heir. What we call patriotism did not count for much then, as the invitation to Louis shows; but though Louis might be preferable to John, he was certainly not preferable to a new king of the old line, who was too young to have done any wrong. To clinch matters, William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, who was regent for the young Henry III, at once and voluntarily re-issued the Charter as the accepted programme of the new reign. The rebel barons rapidly deserted Louis, who, finding his cause hopeless, made peace and withdrew.

Englishmen versus foreigners

However, when Henry III grew to manhood he proved in his own way as unsatisfactory a king as his father. The various sections of the population of England were coming to think of themselves as "the English nation" far more vividly than ever before; yet Henry III persistently ignored this sentiment. He was an amiable, pious and cultured person, but he had no "English" feelings. He preferred foreigners, his mother's relations, his wife's relations, Provençals, Poitevins,

Savoyards; he sought to rule with the help of "favourites" rather than with the help of the great baronial families. In the same way he looked for support to the patronage of the Papacy, and supported foreign papal legates against English churchmen. Thus a national opposition developed, and found its leaders in churchmen such as Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, and barons such as Richard Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, son of William Marshal, and Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester.

The Provisions of Oxford

After a long period of misrule and discontent the quarrel came to a head in 1258. The government was badly in need of money. Henry had just failed in a war with the Welsh, and he was eager to finance an absurd papal project (explained more fully in the next section) for making his younger son Edmund king of Sicily. The Great Council was summoned, and, like a Stuart parliament of later days, proclaimed the doctrine of "no supply till after redress of grievances." They presented to the king a scheme of reforms called the Provisions of Oxford. This was, unlike Magna Carta, a most radical, even revolutionary, document. It demanded that the entire control of the government should be entrusted to a small committee of barons.

Prince Edward and Earl Simon

The barons had learnt, what their fathers who drew up Magna Carta had not realised, that a change in the constitution was needed if kings were to be controlled. But they did not realise that a narrow oligarchy of barons would prove as unacceptable as an uncontrolled monarchy. Two men seem to have seen this clearly from the first. One was the king's eldest son, the future Edward I, who, though little more than a youth, was already active in politics, and proceeded to organise a petition from the knights of the shire, or lesser barons, which severely criticised the Provisions of Oxford. The other was Simon de Montfort. De Montfort is a difficult person to understand, and historians have held divergent views about him. Some regard him as a mere adventurer; others as a far-seeing statesman and the real architect of our parliamentary

institutions, who designed what fate did not allow him to build. He was himself a foreigner and married to the king's sister, and as such he had long been suspected as a mere "favourite." Even when he joined the barons and supported the Provisions of Oxford, he was by no means in sympathy with their aims, for he wanted, to borrow a phrase from an old Greek historian, "to take the people into partnership."

Henry accepted the Provisions in 1258, and repudiated them, with papal approval, in 1261. De Montfort organised rebellion, with support from some of the barons, and more of the knights and towns. At the battle of Lewes (1264) the royalists were defeated, and both Henry and Edward became De Montfort's prisoners.

De Montfort's Parliament

De Montfort now found himself, like Cromwell nearly four hundred years later, master of England by the power of the sword. Like Cromwell, he was not at all clear what to do with his power, and, again like Cromwell, such a revolutionary government as his was far from being what the nation really desired. He quickly got himself into difficulties, and was defeated and killed fifteen months later, at Evesham. But during his brief spell of power he made the experiment which has made his name immortal. He summoned a "parliament" containing not only barons, but also knights from each shire and burgesses from the towns. The purpose of this great assembly was not to make new laws nor to grant taxes, but to witness and confirm the arrangements drawn up as a treaty between De Montfort and Prince Edward. It was a rebel parliament; no doubt it was also a packed parliament from which opponents of the dictator were excluded. We might compare it not so much with a normal parliament as with a national gathering of delegates representing the local branches of a political party. None the less, the example set by the rebel might be followed by the king. De Montfort's greatness was fully recognised by his own followers. Some verses have been preserved in which he is compared with St. Thomas of Canterbury; for Simon had given himself

as a sacrifice for the nation just as Thomas had given himself as a sacrifice for the Church.

The first twenty years of Edward I's reign were times of active legislation. A series of great statutes was issued in a series of "parliaments." Most of them bear the names of the towns to which these parliaments were summoned, *e.g.* the Statutes of Westminster, of Winchester, of Gloucester. They deal, for the most part, with details of feudal rights, and are outside our province here. These parliaments were of very varied composition. Twice both knights and burgesses were summoned, but more often only the knights, in addition to the baronage. Historians, therefore, have fixed upon the parliament of 1295 as the "Complete and Model Parliament" with which parliamentary history in the fullest sense begins.

Edward I

The year, 1295, was a time of acute crisis for both king and kingdom. Philip IV of France had occupied Edward's territories in Gascony and a campaign had failed to dislodge him. French and English seamen were fighting in the Channel, and the French sacked and burnt Dover. There had just been a formidable Welsh rebellion, and now the Scots rose against the puppet king, John Baliol, whom Edward had imposed upon them, and formed an alliance with the French. It was in these circumstances that Edward I summoned his parliament, quoting in his writs of summons "the most righteous law of the emperors (*i.e.* Roman Law) that what touches all should be approved by all." In addition to the "peers spiritual and temporal," *i.e.* bishops, abbots and barons, he summoned two knights from each shire, two burgesses from each town, and clerical representatives of cathedral chapters and of the parish clergy of each diocese. All met together in Westminster Hall, each group sitting apart—an Assembly of Estates, but not yet a Parliament of two Houses. The king unfolded before them the state of the nation, and asked for their financial support; and each estate voted separately what taxes seemed good to it.

The "Model Parliament"

No doubt to Edward his Parliament was primarily a

taxing machine; a great "jury" of the whole nation to hear the national "case" and give its verdict in the form of supplies. He summoned it to strengthen his hands, to ensure that the nation was behind him; he was very far from intending to surrender any of his royal prerogatives. He would never have admitted that, supposing the estates had refused to make grants, he would have been debarred from exacting them on his own authority. He was simply acting on the principle, familiar to all Chancellors of the Exchequer, that the willing taxpayer pays better than the reluctant one. He sought to ensure the taxpayer's good-will. But the crisis continued, and Edward found himself, in the course of the next two years, compelled to exact all kinds of heavy taxes for which his subjects were by no means prepared. Two years later (1297) another Parliament met and in a very different mood from that of 1295. The barons, supported, no doubt, by the knights and burgesses, declared that neither men nor money would be forthcoming until the king re-confirmed Magna Carta, with additional clauses stating that he would levy no such taxes as he had recently levied, without the consent of the estates of the realm. Edward was compelled to consent. This is the famous *Confirmatio Cartarum*; it did not establish in so many words the principle of "no taxation without representation," for it merely specified certain recent taxes which had given special offence. None the less, that principle was plainly not very far away from the minds of the men of 1297. The king's "taxing machine" was on the way to becoming a machine for compelling the king, by controlling his supplies, to bow to the will of his subjects.

The "Confirmation of the Charters"

(ii) *Church and State*

The conflict of Church and State in thirteenth-century England is merely a sort of by-plot in the great European drama of Papacy and Empire. If we first gain a general notion of what happened in Christendom at large, the purely English events will explain themselves.

The period from Gregory VII to Innocent III (1073–1216)

had been the golden age of the Papacy. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to draw a hard-and-fast line between the achievement of the Papacy and the achievement of the Church in general, of which the Papacy was the head. But we may say with confidence that if there had been no Papacy, and the Church in this period had been divided into separate territorial units, it would not have accomplished anything like as much as it did. What it accomplished may be set out very simply as follows. (i) It did much to moderate and abate the wild pagan superstitions of mediaeval man. We may talk of the superstitions of the Church, but they are nothing to the superstitions the Church fought against—devil-worship, belief in fairies and goblins, witchcraft, and all kinds of magic. The Church taught that sin was not to be cured by magic, but by prayer, and it was a lesson the laity badly needed. (ii) The Papacy sought to impose (and eventually succeeded in imposing) on the local priesthoods the rule of celibacy. This seems to us unimportant and even mischievous, because we do not believe in celibacy of the clergy. But the mediaeval world did; and if you have an ideal it is wholesome that your ideal should also be your practice. (iii) The Papacy gave Christendom a uniform and reasonable marriage law. We take a uniform marriage law for granted, but where should we be without it? The mediaeval world was without it until the decree of Innocent III's Lateran Council of 1215. (iv) The same Council also abolished the judicial superstition of the ordeal. (v) The Church courts, administering the Canon Law of the Church (which was based on Roman law), presented in many respects a model which the secular courts of the various states were glad to imitate.

The achievement of the Papacy

One is apt to think of the Pope as a kind of fifth wheel to a coach, a possibly pious, probably hypocritical and pompous official, who had nothing to do but meddle with other people's affairs. But the great Popes were heads of an enormous organisation, which got through an enormous amount of hard administrative work. For such work a suitable basis of

The justification of the Pope's "temporal power"

power was required—power and revenue. We have seen[1] how Gregory VII, when his prestige in the Church was at its height, was driven from Rome by the Emperor Henry IV, and later, how Alexander III was living an exile in France on account of his quarrel with the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa. The claims of the Papacy were, in certain respects, incompatible with the proper authority of secular rulers, and it was against the Emperors that the Popes particularly asserted their claims. For the Emperors, though they were kings of Germany, claimed, as "Roman Emperors," to rule in Italy also, and to reduce the Papacy to a subordinate position. Clearly the business of the Papacy could not be carried on properly under conditions such as were inflicted on Gregory VII and Alexander III.

A series of accidents gave Innocent III (1198–1216) the degree of temporal power that seemed necessary for his spiritual work. The Emperor Henry VI had just died, leaving a child of two, whom he committed, along with the kingdom of Naples and Sicily (which he had inherited by marriage with the heiress of the Norman dukes of Naples and Sicily), to the care of the Papacy. Innocent III was virtually king of Italy; and the Imperial throne was disputed in Germany between rival claimants.

But it could not last. The child of two grew up, and in due time (1212) became the Emperor Frederic II. Frederic II was a man of genius. He combined all Henry II's or Edward I's devotion to good government with a passionate enthusiasm for art and science such as no mediaeval English king could boast. And he hated the Papacy with a deep, bitter and consistent hatred. He cared little for Germany, but he loved Italy and was determined to make it his kingdom; and the Papacy blocked his way at every turn. Thus arose a struggle for existence between Papacy and Empire, which fills most of the reign of Henry III. In fighting such a battle the Empire was in its element, for war and force are within the proper sphere of secular empires. But the Papacy was driven right out of

Struggle of the Papacy with Frederic II

[1] Page 54.

its true course. One might well apply to it the line of Lucretius, *Et propter vitam vitai perdere causas;* in order to live it destroyed the sources of its life. The Papacy had to raise its armies; and armies have to be paid. Every nerve was strained to raise money. Every power and privilege which the Papacy had acquired for the sake of promoting religion and civilisation was transformed into a source of revenue. Everything that could be sold was sold. Such work required a new type of pope, and the perfect example of such was found in Innocent IV (1243–1254), a "consummate man of business, a cold unwavering materialist"—a great man in his way, but the wrong way for a Vicar of Christ.

In a certain sense the Papacy won. Frederic died in 1250; his son Conrad in 1254; another son Manfred in 1266; and his grandson Conradin was caught and executed in 1268. At last the war was over and the hated dynasty of the Hohenstaufen (as they were called) extinct. But the victory had been won at suicidal cost, for the moral and spiritual dignity of the Papacy, on which its authority had been based, was irretrievably lost.

During the whole of this great struggle England was, by reason of John's surrender to the Pope, far more definitely under papal control than ever before—more definitely under papal control than any other state in Europe. After the death of John the royalist party relied on the Pope to protect them against the Chartist barons. The papal legate, Gualo, was a member of the Council of Regency, and secured the exile of most of the prominent churchmen who had supported the Charter. Henry III continued to rely on papal support against his own subjects throughout almost the whole of his reign. England became "the milch cow" of the Papacy, a principal source of the sinews of war for the struggle with Frederic II.

Papal tyranny and extortion in England

Thus in 1231 Henry consented to a papal exaction of a tithe of the property of the Church. Yet more money was raised by the iniquitous system of provisions. English benefices were sold to foreign speculators who bought them

from the Pope. Some never came near the country; others came, but they were not encouraged to take up their duties, for they were frequently the victims of patriotic riots. In 1241 a certain Cardinal Otho visited the country, and was rumoured to have taken away with him more gold and silver than he left behind. About the same time the Pope rewarded the loyalty of the Romans by granting them the next three hundred English benefices that might happen to fall vacant. After the death of Frederic the Papacy proposed to fill his vacant thrones with members of the most docile royal family in Europe. Henry's brother, Richard of Cornwall, consented to be Roman Emperor, and his son Edmund[1] to be king of Sicily. These were mere phantom monarchs, but the honours conferred on them provided an excuse for fresh exactions.

The English Church viewed these matters in the same light as the English nation. Its greatest spokesman was Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, who had made his name as Master of the Oxford Schools. He was, for his time, a really great scholar, and in his diocese a model bishop. His outlook illustrates the perplexity that beset the best minds of the age. In a memorandum which he personally presented to Innocent IV in 1250 he unsparingly denounced the misuses of papal power, but he firmly maintained that the Papacy was absolutely necessary to the welfare of the Church. His works were afterwards quoted with approval by Wycliffe and the Protestants; but if there had been any Protestants in his own day, he would certainly have denounced them.

Grosseteste

The measure of the change which had come over public opinion, and the effect of this change on the Papacy and its supporters, was only fully revealed in the middle of the reign of Edward I. Pope Boniface VIII (1294–1303) an amazing old man of eighty years and more, whose energy and audacity knew no limits,

Edward I and Boniface VIII

[1] Edmund is known to history as Edmund Crouchback, and a legend arose a hundred years later that he had been, in fact, a hump-back; but Crouchback was a corruption of Crossback, and meant Crusader, the Crusade being, of course, the war against the Hohenstaufen.

sought to be such a pope as Innocent III had been a hundred years before, and to give orders to the kings of Christendom. The question at issue was the taxation of the Church by the State. It was admitted that the Church as a feudal landholder had to pay the ordinary feudal taxes (which are more correctly regarded as rents); but during the last hundred years kings had been more and more supplementing these with various taxes on personal property. It began, as we have seen, with the Saladin Tithe of 1187, and so long as these taxes were levied for a Crusade, there could be no objection to the Church paying its share. But much more often than not the purpose of the tax was to finance the warfare of one king against another in the prosecution of quarrels with which the Church, viewed from the papal and supernational standpoint, had no concern. In 1296 Boniface VIII issued the Bull known (by its first words) as *Clericis laicos*, forbidding such taxation of the Church, and Winchelsea, the Archbishop of Canterbury, upheld the Bull and stated that he and his clergy could not pay without permission. But, only the year before, Edward I had elaborately included the clergy in his great "taxing machine," the Model Parliament, and he was not going to be beaten. In reply he took the extraordinary step of outlawing the clergy. "Henceforth," he proclaimed, "there should be no justice meted out to a clerk in the court of the king, but sentence shall be given against a clerk at the instance of all that complain against him." Edward was always ruthlessly logical, and his argument doubtless was: if you will not obey the king's orders, you shall not have the king's protection. Winchelsea could only give way, and authorise the payment of the tax "as a free gift"; and Boniface VIII issued a second Bull making the same concession.

The fall of Archbishop Winchelsea

Two years later (1299) William Wallace, the Scottish patriot, visited Rome and induced Boniface VIII to issue a letter declaring that Scotland was free of allegiance to the English king, and Winchelsea, very unwisely, again followed the lead of his master in Rome. Edward appealed to his Parliament, which, of course, denounced both pope and archbishop. In 1306, after Boni-

face himself had fallen, a new and very different pope was willing to oblige the king by punishing his too papalist archbishop. Winchelsea was practically expelled from the country, and remained abroad for the rest of the reign. Anselm and Becket had both, in earlier days, been driven across the seas, but they were almost as formidable abroad as at home. Winchelsea simply disappeared: he was not missed.

The downfall of the Papacy

Once again the English incident is but the shadow cast by greater events abroad. We must turn to the downfall of the Papacy itself. The Bull *Clericis laicos* had offended Philip IV of France as much as it had offended Edward I, and he was a ruler equally strong and much more ruthless. His reply to the Bull was to forbid all taxes paid by the French Church to Rome—an ingenious policy, for it brought the French Church round to his side. Boniface sent a legate, and Philip threw him into prison. He sent a Bull, and Philip had it publicly burnt in front of Notre Dame, thus anticipating the dramatic gesture of Luther two hundred and twenty years later (1301 and 1520). In 1302 he summoned the first full meeting of the French Estates General, which was thus born at almost the same date as the English Parliament, and was, like the English Parliament, devised as a "taxing machine." But this was not all. In collaboration with certain Roman enemies of the Pope, he organised a plot by which the Pope was successfully kidnapped at his country house at Anagni, and subjected to shameful insults. Boniface was rescued after three days, but he died—some say he died mad, as a result of his sufferings—a few weeks later.

Canossa and Anagni

It has been said that the Great Age of the Papacy began at Canossa and ended at Anagni. This is true enough; and what a contrast between the two incidents! At Canossa (1077) a Holy Roman Emperor pleading for absolution before a pope whose strength is the tide of Christian enthusiasm behind him; at Anagni (1303) another pope simply kidnapped by force and guile. But why does the squalid and tragic incident at Anagni mark an

epoch? Because the public opinion that had backed Hildebrand no longer backed his successor. Philip IV's rascally agents did not overthrow the Papacy: they simply revealed to the world that it had already fallen.

Two years later, under Philip's influence, a Frenchman, Clement V, was elected Pope and insisted on taking up his residence, not at Rome, but at Avignon in the south of France. The so-called Seventy Years' Captivity of the Papacy (1305–1378) had begun. This was the Pope who obliged Edward I in the matter of Archbishop Winchelsea.

(iii) *France and Wales*

The relations of the English monarchy with its French possessions were less important in this period than in either the period before or the period after. Gascony remained throughout the thirteenth century the only French province of the Plantagenet line, and its allegiance was often little more than nominal. Henry III undertook light-hearted and futile expeditions to chastise his feudatories from time to time, and for four years (1248–1252) Simon de Montfort was governor of Gascony. His government was so "thorough" that it roused a chorus of complaint from the Gascon nobles, and Henry weakly consented to his recall. This was one of the many grievances of the future "architect of Parliament" against his sovereign. Afterwards, Edward I interested himself greatly in continental affairs and on one occasion was absent from England for three and a half years. No previous king could have afforded to be away so long: he would have found everything in confusion on his return. But Edward's continental performances are of little real importance.

Gascony

The beginnings of the conquest of Ireland came within the last chapter, and the attempted conquest of Scotland belongs to the next. To the thirteenth century, however, belongs the conquest of Wales.

William the Conqueror followed the example of his Saxon

predecessors in making no serious effort to conquer the mountainous country of Wales. Instead, he established three strong and semi-independent border, or Marcher, earldoms of Chester, Shrewsbury and Hereford for three of his Norman followers, and left to them the task of dealing with the Welsh. He also built a royal castle at Cardiff. Rufus accomplished a temporary conquest of South Wales, and Henry I established a colony of Flemings in Pembrokeshire, but Anglo-Welsh history throughout the twelfth century is a tedious record of petty warfare and brigandage. In 1194, however, a remarkable chieftain of North Wales appeared on the scene, Llewelyn I, who for forty years maintained a kind of overlordship over all the Welsh, and occasionally allied himself with English Marcher barons in rebellion against the Crown. His policy was continued by his grandson, Llewelyn II, who supported Simon de Montfort, and sent Welsh troops to the battle of Evesham. However, he afterwards made submission and acknowledged the overlordship of the English crown.

Wales before Edward I

Llewelyn II, however, was not inclined to accept indefinitely the part of a vassal. Quarrels arose, and Edward undertook Welsh campaigns in 1277 and 1282. The second ended in the death of Llewelyn, the execution of his brother, David, as a traitor, and the complete conquest of the country. English law was introduced, English order enforced, and trade in wool developed. The conquered kingdom was also honoured by providing a title for the king's eldest son.

Conquest of Wales

More than a hundred years later, in the troubled times following the deposition of Richard II and the accession of the House of Lancaster, the Welsh rose once more under Owen Glendower (or Owain Glyndwfrdwy for such as can pronounce it). This was the last national rebellion of the Welsh. Eighty years later again, they supported a more fortunate cause. Henry of Richmond, with the blood of the Welsh Tudors mingling with the blood of bastard Lancastrians in his veins, landed at Milford Haven in 1485, and Welsh supporters played a prominent part in winning the

battle of Bosworth, which placed the Tudor dynasty on the throne.

(iv) *Life in general from William I to Edward I*

The distinction between Norman and Saxon, between conqueror and conquered, was obliterated within a hundred years of the Conquest. Yet we cannot say that, by this date, the conquering families had become English. It would be much truer to say that the upper class among the conquered had become French like their conquerors. For two centuries after Hastings the language, dress and customs of the English upper classes were entirely French. Henry I could talk English, but Henry II knew not a word of the language, and did not require it. Henry III knew a certain amount of English, but he seldom used it. The native language was allowed in the law courts, but only as a concession to the ignorant. Yet a change was already perceptible before the end of the thirteenth century. "Anglo-French" was becoming an artificial dialect, despised by the real Frenchmen from across the Channel.

French influences

It is not surprising that these centuries produced only the merest rudiments of English literature. History and law books, as well as theology, were written in Latin. However, in John's reign, one Layamon composed a patriotic verse-chronicle called the *Brut*, recording legends of British History "since the Flood," and another person called Orm translated portions of the Bible into rhyming English verse. These rude performers come about fifty years after the cessation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles and about a hundred and fifty years before Chaucer.

Beginnings of English literature

The great art of the age was not literature, but architecture. Nothing expresses so completely the gulf between Saxon and Norman as the contrast between what survives of Saxon and of Norman architecture. Though a few small stone churches, parts of churches, and towers survive from Saxon times, far the

Architecture

greater number of their churches were of wood and have perished; and they built no castles. The Normans, on the other hand, have left us magnificent cathedrals and churches in all parts of the country. In the thirteenth century the so-called "Early English" style supersedes the Norman, and the semi-circular arch is replaced by the pointed arch. The age of the three Edwards is marked by the development of the "Decorated" style, in which windows of elaborated tracery supersede the plain "lancet" of the Early English style. Then the Black Death damps down the ardour of church-building, and when it revives, the Perpendicular style predominates, and the arch is gradually flattened in both window and roof. Finally the Reformation transfers wealth and the capacity to build from the Church to the laity, and the Perpendicular style is adapted, with the necessary modifications, to the Elizabethan manor-house. The earlier of these styles of architecture—the miscalled "Early English" just as much as the Norman—came to England from the Continent; but the Perpendicular is an English invention which has no precise counterpart abroad.

Just as, in the wide areas of England still untouched to-day by the industrial revolution, the church dominates the village and the cathedral its city, so did the Church in a non-architectural sense dominate the life of the Middle Ages. Through the Church the quick-witted gained learning and advancement; to the Church the poor looked for the simple equivalents of all the elaborate services they now receive from the State. The village church served many purposes besides those which we should call religious. The porch was used for the transaction of much of the business of ordinary life. The coroner held his court there. Above the porch was often a room which served as a village school. The nave was often used for county-court proceedings. It also served as a store-room for public property. Here was kept the public coffin in which the dead were carried to the churchyard (for only the great were actually buried in coffins), the fire-hook for dragging down burning cottages, the ducking-stool for the

Social importance of the Church

correction of offenders, and the great chest in which the wills of the villagers were stored. On the other hand, there were seldom pulpits or pews until the fifteenth century, for people came to church for mass more than for sermons, and the congregation either knelt or stood.[1]

The monasteries increased immensely in numbers and wealth during the two centuries following the Conquest. They were great landlords and great dispensers of charity and hospitality, but, except that they secured a large share of what should have been the incomes of the parish priests, they did not interfere much in the ordinary life of the parish. The friars, however, brought many new elements into the religious and social life of the people.

The two great founders of the Friars or Mendicant (*i.e.* Begging) Orders, St. Francis and St. Dominic, were both contemporaries of Innocent III and King John. St. Francis was inspired to imitate Our Lord by voluntarily adopting His poverty, and devoting himself to the needs of the poorest and the humblest. St. Dominic, after preaching among the heretic Albigenses of southern France, founded an Order which should devote itself first and foremost to studying and teaching the truths of religion. But the Dominicans quickly adopted the voluntary poverty of the Franciscans, and the Franciscans soon rivalled the educational enthusiasm of the Dominicans, so that there was little to distinguish the Black (Dominican) from the Grey (Franciscan) Friars. They drew to themselves in the thirteenth century the energy which, in the twelfth, had gone into the Crusades. The first friars to reach England (1221) came barefooted and destitute of the commonest necessities, and in no country did they do more good. In almost every town arose a priory and a chapel, planted in the poorest quarters—unlike the establishments of the monks, which generally stood amidst broad acres in the countryside. Their first houses were built of mud and timber, and their food was vegetables, porridge and cheap ale.

The Friars

[1] Based on E. A. G. Lamborn, "Ecclesiastical Architecture," in *Mediaeval England.*

After a time gifts and legacies flowed in. These were invested under trustees, but the magnificent establishments of the greater priories, though built, no doubt, to the glory of God, entailed a great expenditure on their upkeep, and the proceeds of begging were thus more and more diverted from charitable purposes. "The cares of poverty," it has been said, "proved as distracting to the friars as the cares of property to the monks." But the friars of the thirteenth century were at their best, and we must not judge them by the gibes of Chaucer, which belong to a later age.

These ardent and popular newcomers were by no means welcomed by the parish priests. They introduced a stimulating but disturbing element of competition. The practice of annual confession was coming into vogue, and had, in fact, been ordained as compulsory by Innocent III's Lateran Council of 1215. The friars proved more popular as confessors than the parish priest. No doubt they were both more skilled and more sympathetic in their discharge of that delicate duty; but, on the other side, it could be maintained that they were also too lenient in the penances they exacted, and that the preference for confessing to a friar you might never see again, rather than to the resident priest of your parish, was not likely to be founded on the highest motives. Then the friars elaborated the new art of popular sermon-preaching. In fact, they studied this art with care and even published volumes of suitable anecdotes with which their preachers could enliven their discourses. The parish priest had the right to refuse a friar the use of his church, but the proceeding was not popular. The parishioners of a Devon parish in 1301 report that "their vicar is an honest man and preaches to the best of his ability, but inadequately," and they go on to complain that he will not allow the friars to preach in his church, and they "pray that he may be corrected."[1]

From the friars it is natural to pass to the universities,

[1] From A. G. Little, "The Mendicant Orders," in *Mediaeval England.*

for the friars played a leading part in their early history. Educational activity can be traced at Oxford as early as the reign of Henry I, but the founding of the university belongs to the reign of Henry II, and was a direct consequence of the quarrel with Becket. The University of Paris was already the greatest in Christendom, and there were many English students there. In 1167 Louis VII was supporting Becket, who was in exile in his dominions, and Henry II issued an ordinance commanding all English clerks resident in France to return to England "as they loved their revenues." These returning exiles formed the nucleus of the University of Oxford. Forty years later (1209) an Oxford clerk killed a townsman; the townsmen undertook reprisals, and some of the less bold of the students, preferring peace to glory, migrated "some to Paris, some to Reading, and some to Cambridge," which was thus a daughter of Oxford, as Oxford of Paris.

Universities

Grosseteste, the friend of Simon de Montfort and the critic of papal abuses, may be called the first great Oxford man. In 1230 he accepted the post of lecturer to the Franciscan school in Oxford, and sought to widen the narrow basis of mediaeval learning by encouraging the study of Greek and of mathematics. He wrote a text-book of geometry. Not only was he perhaps the most learned man of his age, but he seems, unlike many learned men, to have been a wonderful teacher. We read that his pupils "in an incredibly short time made such progress" that their services were in demand in France, Italy and Germany. When all education was conducted in Latin, teachers passed from country to country with an ease unhappily impossible to-day. The most eminent of Grosseteste's pupils was the great mathematician Roger Bacon. Romantic admirers of this much persecuted man of genius generally depict him as "two hundred years before his time," as a modern voice crying in a mediaeval wilderness. But such eccentricities do not, in fact, occur; and Bacon was merely the finest product of Grosseteste's Oxford, to which all his life he

looked back as the one place in Christendom where mathematics was properly taught.

In Grosseteste's time there were no colleges. The students lived in self-governed Halls, or lodgings, under the general discipline of the Chancellor of the University. Colleges originated when generous persons began to endow Halls for the use of students and to entrust their control to Masters or Wardens nominated in the deed of endowment. Four colleges at Oxford and one at Cambridge were founded before 1300.

Schools

Of the schools of the early Middle Ages we know very little. The simple village schools over the church porches have already been mentioned. Higher in grade were the grammar schools of the towns, of which there were three in London as early as 1137. Grammar schools were generally dependent on cathedrals or parish churches. The services of the monasteries to the education of any but intending monks were much slighter than seems usually supposed. All these schools were probably very elementary in character, and it was not till much later that William of Wykeham, the founder of New College, Oxford, founded Winchester College at the same time (1379), in order that youths might come up to the university properly grounded in the elements. His example was followed half a century later by King Henry VI, the founder of King's College, Cambridge, and Eton (1442).

Military architecture

But the men of war were much more conspicuous in the Middle Ages than the men of peace. To-day warfare is rare but overpoweringly terrible; in the Middle Ages it was normal, and the great ones seem to have almost enjoyed it, though possibly the rank and file did not. The strain was comparatively mild, and the conduct of most defeated armies would be accounted gross cowardice by modern standards. Armies ran away very readily, and the main object of the winners was often to make money by holding prisoners to ransom.

What are popularly called "Norman castles" are mostly not Norman at all. The first Norman castle erected in

England was the castle constructed at Hastings by William on landing, and the Bayeux tapestry shows it to have been a simple mound surrounded by a ditch, with a timbered stockade on top. The great majority of the royal castles of the Norman kings were of this type; so also were the baronial castles built in Stephen's reign and destroyed by the orders of Henry II. Only in a few cases of special importance, at London, for example, and Colchester, did the Norman kings replace the woodwork with a stone tower or keep. The great majority of the stone keeps belong to the reign of Henry II. The thirteenth century supplemented the stone keep with the outer fortified walls, and this type of castle reaches its perfection in the castles, such as Conway, built by Edward I for the garrisoning of Wales. In the fourteenth century the age of castle-building was drawing to an end, and its principles were applied to the fortification of cities such as York and Chester.

The history of the towns, and with them the history of trade and industry, must be left over till a later chapter. Here it must suffice to say that raw wool was the principal export, and that, among imports, wine exceeded in value all the others added together. This was the drink of the great ones; the poor drank ale brewed from the barley of their own fields.

Trade

History is often taunted with snobbishly concentrating its attention upon the rich and powerful. It is inevitable, for in many periods, though not in all, the poor have almost no history, if by history be meant events, progress, development. In this period perhaps three-quarters of the population were serfs, villeins; not slaves, for Lanfranc and Anselm had extinguished slavery, but "bound to the soil" by law, and bound to it also by a state of mind devoid of any apparent aspiration to get away from it. The villein's world, economically and politically, was the manor of his lord, and the villagers who shared his lot with him. We need not pity him, for the simple country-bred Englishman was reported of as "merry" even under the Norman kings. There were good lords and bad

The poor

lords; he may even have been dimly aware that under good kings there was comparative peace and quietness, and under bad kings waste, tyranny and confusion. But these things probably mattered less than good harvests and bad harvests, and were equally beyond his control and comprehension. The contented villein was the stable foundation of twelfth- and thirteenth-century society. In the fourteenth century, as we shall see, he ceased to be contented.

CHAPTER IV

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY (1286–1399)

(i) *The Scottish and French Wars*

WARS with Scotland and wars with France fill the fourteenth century, the Scottish wars beginning with Edward I's invasion in 1296 and the French wars ending with Richard II's Thirty Years' Truce (which only lasted nineteen years) in 1396. A war-like effort so prolonged must stagger the imaginations of modern men who have seen Europe brought to the verge of ruin by a war of only fifty-two months. But the wars of the fourteenth century were comparatively casual and light-hearted undertakings. Not only were they less destructive, but there was much less to destroy. Armies, even in the major campaigns, were small—the Black Prince had, at the outside, 7,000 men under him at Poitiers, the greatest battle of the century. Major campaigns were few and far between. Most of the campaigns were little more than raids, and years of truce alternated in about equal proportions with years of fighting.

Scotland

The Scots are and long have been most decidedly a nation; but racially they are as mixed as the English, and mixed of very much the same elements. Angles and Danes, in Scotland as in England, had colonised the Lowlands and imposed themselves upon a Celtic population. Southern and Eastern Scotland had been, for some centuries before Edward I, thoroughly "English" in race, language and civilisation. Its aristocracy possessed estates in England, just as the Anglo-Norman aristocracy possessed estates in France. The greatest of its early kings, David I (1124–1153), who has been called "the maker of Scotland," had been educated by Normans in England, and brought with

him a group of Norman baronial families to Scotland. But it was just because Scotland had, unlike Wales and Ireland, acquired under Anglo-Norman influence a certain strength of political fibre, a certain amount of order and unity, that it successfully refused to be conquered. Ever since the Norman Conquest Scottish kings had from time to time done homage to the kings of England; but was it for their kingdom of Scotland, or only for their estates in England? Much might be, and, in fact, was, said upon both sides in that typically mediaeval controversy. It has no interest to-day. We proceed to the story of the Scottish Succession and all that it involved.

The Scottish Succession

In 1286 Alexander III of Scotland fell off his horse and broke his neck. His only direct heir was a grand-daughter aged three, the so-called "Maid of Norway," who herself died on her way to Scotland from Norway four years later. Hard-and-fast rules of inheritance were unknown in the Middle Ages, and several Anglo-Scottish nobles now claimed the throne, among them Baliol[1] and Bruce. Edward of England accepted an invitation to adjudicate, on condition that the claimants accepted the overlordship of the English crown: and, after an elaborate parade of legal investigation, awarded the crown to John Baliol by the Award of Norham, 1292.

The Scottish War

Baliol found himself at once a king of Scotland and a puppet of England. He did not like the position, and his subjects liked it still less. Philip IV of France, quarrelling with Edward over the eternal Gascon question, poured oil upon the flames of patriotic discontent. The Scots rose against English control. Edward, after holding his "Model Parliament," invaded the country and achieved the first of his deceptively easy conquests (1296). Baliol was deposed, and Edward assumed the Scottish crown himself, despatching to Westminster (where it still remains) the famous coronation stone of the Scottish kings. The next year (1297) saw the Scots in arms again, and William Wallace, a knight from near Paisley, descended probably

[1] Son of the founder of the Oxford college of that name.

from an old Anglo-Norman family, defeated Edward's lieutenants at Stirling. 1298 witnessed Edward's second conquest and his victory at Falkirk, the first demonstration of the efficiency of the English long-bow, which was to revolutionise the tactics of Western Europe. In 1303 Edward undertook and achieved his third conquest, and in 1307 he would doubtless have achieved his fourth, had he not died at the beginning of the campaign in the neighbourhood of Gretna Green. In fact, Scotland could be "conquered" any number of times, but the Scottish people refused to accept the result.

Bannockburn

Certainly it could not be conquered by the new king. Edward II was a most unkingly person—a gambler, a drinker and a coward. The first years of his reign were consumed in quarrels with his own barons, while young Robert Bruce, the grandson of Baliol's rival, was making himself king of Scotland. When Edward II invaded Scotland in 1314, the campaign was hopelessly mismanaged, and the English forces decisively defeated at Bannockburn, while trying to relieve the last remaining English garrison in Stirling. During the years that followed Bruce carried fire and sword through the northern counties of England until peace was made by Roger Mortimer, who had overthrown and murdered Edward II, in 1329. Bruce was recognised as king of Scotland, and all claim of English overlordship was abandoned.

Edward Baliol

Edward III (who succeeded in destroying the blood-stained regent in 1330) repeated the experiment of his grandfather, Edward I, in slightly different circumstances. In 1332, Edward Baliol, son of John, and certain Scottish lords of the English party who had lost their estates, made a raid upon Scotland, and, being armed with the long-bow, defeated the Scots at Dupplin Moor. Edward III's attitude had been very much that of Queen Elizabeth to Sir Francis Drake: he knew nothing about it officially until success was assured. But Dupplin Moor tempted him to intervene. An English army crossed the border, won another long-bow victory at Halidon Hill, and

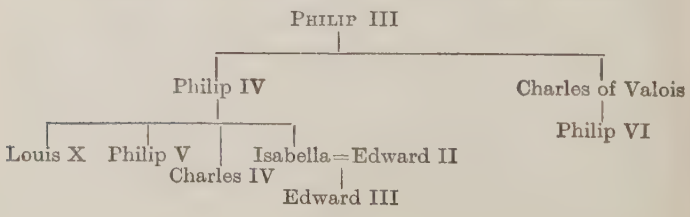
once more a Baliol reigned in Scotland as an English puppet. History, however, continued to repeat itself. The Scots would not endure the English puppet; Edward III, becoming entangled in his French quarrel, lost interest in his protégé; Baliol fell, and David II, son of Bruce, ruled once again over an independent Scotland.

Fortune did not continue to smile on King David. He invaded England, in alliance with the French, in the year of Crecy (1346), was defeated and captured at Neville's Cross, and spent fourteen years as a prisoner in England. So the story goes on. Sometimes England is the aggressor, sometimes Scotland. Not until nearly three hundred years after the death of Edward I was his dream of a union of the English and Scottish crowns fulfilled, and then it was a Scottish king who, without any war of conquest, ascended the English throne.

Edward III and The Hundred Years' War

It is easy to enumerate several causes of the famous Hundred Years' War. There was (i) the old problem of Gascony, the one surviving province of the empire of Henry II: French kings could not let it alone, and English kings could not abandon it; (ii) the problem of preventing the French king from getting control of the great Flemish cities, Ghent, Bruges and Ypres, to which the English exported their wool; (iii) the growing rivalry between English and French sailors in the Channel; (iv) French interferences in Scotland; (v) the claim of Edward III to the French crown against Philip of Valois, after the three sons of Philip IV had died without male heirs—this was a pretext rather than a cause of the

EDWARD III'S CLAIM TO THE FRENCH THRONE



war. Each of these causes counts for something, and the first of them for a great deal; but the war would not have been fought on such a splendid—and expensive—scale, but for the character of the English king. It is easy to criticise Edward III. He was neither a great general nor a great statesman; but he was, in his prime, a splendid specimen of vigorous manhood. He was a great fighter, a great sportsman and a great patriot, of the kind that is determined that Britain shall not only rule the waves, but also as much of the dry land as she can lay hands on. He declared that England was "more delightful and more profitable than all other lands," and he was determined to make his people the most famous in the world. He succeeded.

Take the evidence of an eminent and neutral witness, the Italian poet Petrarch. "In my youth," says Petrarch, "the Britons, whom we call Angles or English, were esteemed the most timid of the barbarians, inferior to the wretched Scots. Now they are the most warlike of peoples. They have overturned the ancient military glory of the French." Such was Edward III's achievement—a showy achievement, which philosophic persons are entitled to despise. But Edward and his subjects were anything but philosophers. The long-bow had proved its deadly efficiency in an obscure corner of the world—"the wretched Scots." Edward III took it to France, and the centres of the civilised world were duly impressed.

To record the campaigns of Edward's French wars would be beyond the compass of this book. Many of them were quite futile: some were entire failures; the only point they all had in common was that they were all expensive. We pick out the three notable triumphs. In 1340 the naval victory of Sluys, at the mouth of the Scheldt, gave the English the command of the sea, which they retained for thirty years. In 1346 a vaguely marauding campaign in northern France led to the brilliant victory of Crecy, and the far more important capture of Calais. We are accustomed to regard Calais as an English "white elephant," not worth the expense of its keep; but for a long period after its capture it was valuable, not only

Sluys, Crecy, Calais, and Poitiers

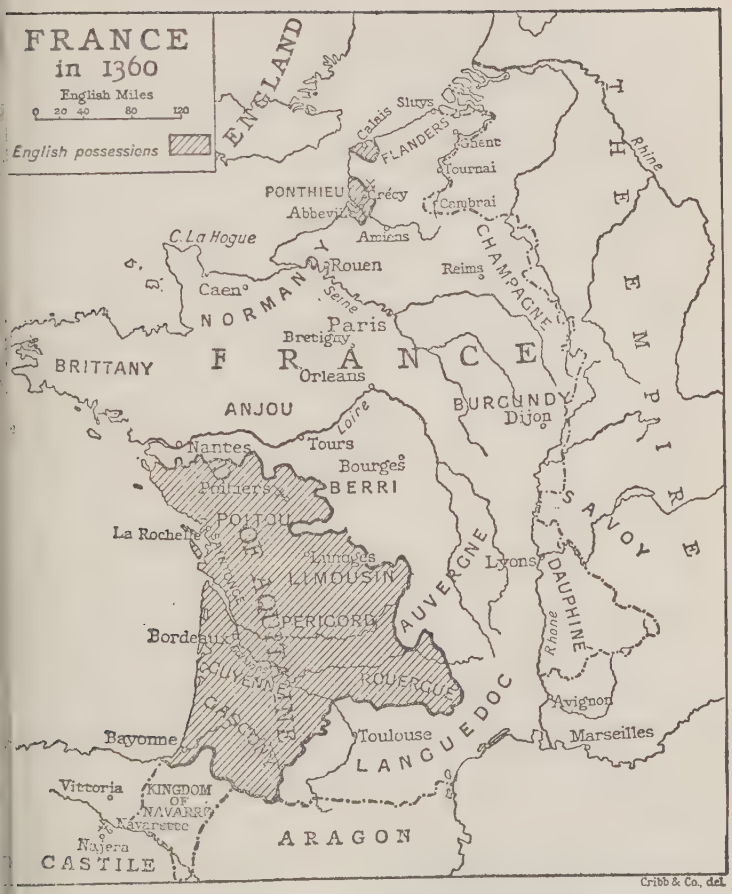
as a military base, but also as a depot for the English wool trade. Ten years later, in 1356, the Black Prince, Edward's eldest son, setting out from Gascony, won his great victory at Poitiers, capturing the French king John. In the Scottish battles the long-bow had defeated dense columns of infantry armed with pikes. At Crecy it defeated feudal cavalry, such as had won every battle in France for three hundred years. At Poitiers the French knights dismounted and charged on foot; but the result was the same. The long-bow proved itself the best weapon of war till it should be ousted by gunpowder. No wonder Parliament ordained that peasants and yeomen should practise the long-bow "on Sundays and holidays, and leave all playing of tennis and football."

Four years later (1360) by the Treaty of Calais (or Brétigni) peace was made on terms which marked the summit of Edward III's achievement. Not only Calais, but a vast area in south-western France, were ceded to the English crown, and King John's ransom was fixed at three million gold crowns, an indemnity vastly exceeding in value anything demanded from France after Waterloo or Sedan, and comparable with the sums demanded from Germany in 1919. Needless to say, only a small fraction of it was ever paid.

The Treaty of Calais

Nine years later (1369) the war was renewed, and with very different results. France had now a capable king in Charles V and a good general in Du Guesclin, while Edward III was old and feeble, and the Black Prince incapacitated by disease. The French, being unable to win pitched battles, simply avoided them, and wore down the invaders by what are called Fabian tactics, capturing their cities one by one. Moreover, the English lost command of the sea, and saw their own coasts harried, the Isle of Wight occupied, and Portsmouth burnt. At last Richard II secured peace, or rather a thirty years' truce, in 1396, in accordance with which the English retained no more than Calais and the coastal strip of Gascony which had been attached to the English crown since the reign of Henry II.

Defeat of the English



Note. In this map the possessions of Edward III in France are seen at their greatest extent, following the signature of the Treaty of Brétigni (1360).

(ii) *The Black Death and the Peasants' Revolt*

Between those two small achievements of human prowess, the battles of Crecy and Poitiers, there befell an event of such vast proportions that mediaeval men had no hesitation in regarding it as an act of God. The oriental disease known to-day as a bubonic plague swept across Europe from the Mediterranean and fell upon the British Isles in 1349 and 1350. Plague, pestilence and famine were, as the Litany (composed two hundred years later) reminds us, as familiar to mediaeval peoples as battle, murder and sudden death, but this Black Death was an exceptionally severe visitation. Excitable persons said that nine-tenths of the population of England perished. Froissart, a contemporary, sets down the deaths as one in three throughout Christendom, and, while some modern historians accept his estimate, others prefer a lower figure. We can only say that the loss of life was on a stupendous scale. Some estimate that not till the time of Elizabeth had England again the population of the first years of Edward III.

The Black Death

The Black Death brought in its train important economic consequences which amounted in their totality to a social and industrial revolution. But the term revolution may well mislead, for the changes came slowly, being spread over the next two hundred years; nor can we say that the Black Death was their sole cause. The Black Death jerked violently forward a movement which had already begun.

Its economic results

It is a commonplace that slavery does not pay, though the slave-owner generally takes a very long time to discover its truth. The same was true of villein-labour, and some time before the Black Death landlords had begun to accept rent instead of labour from the villeins on their estate, and to hire "free labourers" at a wage to do the work previously done by villeins. The Black Death created a sudden shortage of labour, and the free labourers that survived, finding increased competition for their services, demanded higher

wages—a demand justified in itself by the sudden rise of prices which took place at the same time. Parliament, in which not only the Lords, but also the Knights of the Shire who dominated the House of Commons, represented the landowner's interest, while the burgesses represented the employers of the towns, was not prepared to allow this, and the famous Statute of Labourers, 1351, ordained that the old wages, and also the old prices, should be maintained. Masters who offered, and men who demanded, more than the legal rates were to be punished, the former with a fine and the latter with imprisonment.[1]

But mediaeval laws were often little more than statements of unrealised ideals. In this case economic law, as we now call it, went its way with no more regard for statute-law than the tides for King Canute. Prices remained high. Labourers, if they found their employer would not raise their wages, migrated in search of a landlord who preferred to break the law rather than to see his fields untilled. Villeins, discontented with their lot and envious of the free labourers, absconded from their estates and joined the rovers. Thus began a period of what we now call "industrial unrest." It was by no means a time of misery: rather it was a time of irritation, of prospective prosperity constantly thwarted. It is not blank despair that breeds the revolutionary temper so much as hopes deferred. The long quiescence of the masses was over, not to be restored until Stuart times. A long struggle of employer *versus* employee had begun. The classes begin to envisage one another with a new hostility. It is no longer

> "God made them high and lowly
> And ordered their estate,"

which seems to express the outlook in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. On the contrary, we find the courtier Froissart denouncing the sullenness and suspiciousness of

[1] This invidious distinction between the treatment of employers and employees committing similar offences remained, in one form or another, on the Statute book till abolished by Disraeli's Masters and Servants' Act of 1867.

the "lower classes," and Langland[1] denouncing the wicked pride of the rich.

Gradually, very gradually, a solution was found along lines which neither party at the moment foresaw. The landlords, wearying of the attempt to secure adequate labour at a reasonable price, let outlying portions of their estates to villeins or free labourers, as tenant farmers. Others turned their land over from agriculture to pasture, and bred sheep for wool, thus maintaining their profits while reducing their wages bill. As this latter process advanced, the shortage of labour was gradually transformed into what economists call a "glut," and unwanted agriculturists migrated to the towns. England began to spin and weave its own wool instead of sending it to Flanders, and "the grey-faced sheep," denounced by Sir Thomas More for depopulating the countryside, provided work in towns for the men it had driven from the fields. Villeinage disappeared.

But long before all these changes had come about the peasantry summed up their discontents in one short, sharp dramatic explosion. The famous Peasants' Revolt of 1381 was all over in a month, and it seems to have exercised no permanent influence whatever upon the subsequent relations of masters and men; but it is a fascinating episode, for it introduces us to the "real people" of England. The long drama of kings, princes and prelates is interrupted, and for a brief moment the crowd surges behind the footlights.[2]

The Peasants' Revolt

The spark that kindled the explosion was the heavy taxation entailed by the later stages of the French war, more particularly the attempt to tax the masses by means of a poll-tax of at least one groat on every member of every free family. Only two leaders are more than mere names to us, John Ball and Wat Tyler. John Ball, "the mad priest of Essex," had long been unfavourably known to the authori-

[1] For both these writers see section (iv) of this chapter.

[2] There are many excellent detailed accounts easily accessible, *e.g.* in G. M. Trevelyan's *England in the Age of Wycliffe*. Many, it may be hoped, will also read that little masterpiece of English prose, *A Dream of John Ball*, by William Morris.

ties as a preacher of revolution in the guise of Christianity. He foretold that the time was soon coming when the wickedness of the rich would be punished, and there would be no more rich and poor, but all should be equal, as God intended they should be. For such doctrines the bishops had more than once put him in prison. Tyler of Maidstone is a less agreeable figure: he seems to have been an ex-serviceman of some military skill and experience, but there is ground for thinking that he was chiefly notable as a highwayman. It is, after all, typical of revolutions in general that we should find both the idealist and the ruffian among the leaders of 1381.

The trouble began at Brentwood in Essex on May 30, when a tax-collector was stoned by the villagers. Kent round about Maidstone rose on June 2, and on June 12 the rebels were encamped on Blackheath, when John Ball preached on the text

> "When Adam delved and Eve span
> Who was then a gentleman?"

London Bridge was betrayed by friends within the city, and all London was at the mercy of the insurgents. They murdered Archbishop Sudbury, who, as Chancellor, was the minister responsible for the poll-tax, and sacked the palace of John of Gaunt, the most powerful of the great nobles. Others vented their fury upon the colonies of aliens, particularly the Flemings, who were supposed to grow rich at the expense of poor Englishmen; and on the lawyers, the friends of the rich in all disputes between rich and poor. The Temple, the head-quarters of the lawyers, was sacked, and "it was marvellous to see how even the most aged and infirm of them scrambled off, with the agility of rats or of evil spirits."

Richard II's councillors had given a dismal exhibition of cowardice and incompetence, and only the king himself, a boy of fourteen, rose to the occasion. Twice he interviewed vast crowds of the rioters, on June 14 and 15. On the first occasion he promised them everything they asked, abolition

of villeinage and repeal of the Statute of Labourers. On the second occasion Tyler grew insolent and was killed by the Mayor of London, and Richard saved a perilous situation by cantering forward from among his councillors, and crying "Sirs, will you shoot your king? I will be your chief and captain, you shall have from me all you ask."

This was really the end. The bulk of the peasants streamed homeward, and the minority of mere rioters who remained were easily overcome. The ruling classes breathed again. It is tempting to suppose that Richard had been stirred by generous democratic sympathies on June 15, and that the perjury which followed was forced on him by his councillors; but all the evidence points the other way. "Villeins ye are, and villeins ye shall remain," were his words on June 23, and in this spirit the remains of the revolt were dealt with. The leaders, including Ball, were executed, and the king's promises declared void as having been made under compulsion.

Besides the revolts of Kent and Essex, which converged on London, there were local risings of the peasants in many counties, the most formidable being in Norfolk, which was suppressed by the warlike Bishop Spencer of Norwich. There were also a number of purely urban risings. The rebels in the towns seized the opportunity afforded by the widespread confusion to seek the attainment of objects quite distinct from those of the peasantry. We have seen how, in Richard I's reign, many towns had secured charters of self-government from Hubert Walter. These were towns within the royal demesnes. Most towns within the demesnes of lay lords had by this time secured their freedom, for lay lords were apt to get into financial difficulties, and to consent to grant charters in return for cash. Ecclesiastical landlords, on the other hand, were both more business-like and more tenacious, and towns of their estates found it harder to secure their freedom. Thus St. Albans and Bury St. Edmunds rose against the great abbeys on whose estates they stood, and at Cambridge the townsmen rose against the university, and sacked Corpus

Local risings

Christi College. At other towns, which had already secured a charter, such as Winchester and Scarborough, the poorer townsfolk rose against the ring of rich families which had secured control of the municipal government. Elsewhere the riots took the form of employees *versus* employers, for the trade guilds were already growing restricted, and the class of journeymen or wage-earners was becoming distinct from the class of masters. Foreigners, wherever such were to be found, were sure to be victims of riots, and we may be sure that it was genuine Londoners rather than incomers from Kent and Essex who led the onslaught upon the Flemings. Hatred of foreigners is one of the less amiable symptoms of patriotism, and the spirit which had gloried in Crecy and Poitiers found a new channel of expression now that the great days of the French war were over.

(iii) *King, Lords, and Commons*

When we think of Parliament we think mainly, if not entirely, of the House of Commons. We envisage the House of Lords as a kind of appendage, superior in dignity, perhaps, but inferior in power, contenting itself, except on rare occasions such as the great Reform Bill of 1832, with meekly accepting the measures originated in the elective House. It is the House of Commons, led by Pym and Hampden, that we think of as declaring war on Charles I, and we know that it is the House of Commons to-day that makes and unmakes Governments. But we must put these familiar notions entirely away if we are to understand the growth of Parliament in the Middle Ages. Then the baronage, the great lords and the politically minded bishops, were the rivals of the crown. Sometimes they sought the aid, and secured the control, of the humble Commoners. Sometimes they unwisely ignored them, and then the king would adroitly appeal to the Commoners and secure their support against the Lords. It is always as a much-courted, but essentially humble satellite that the House of Commons figures in the fourteenth century.

Mediaeval Parliament

Formation of the House of Commons

Again, we must not think of the House of Commons itself as in any way resembling the House of Commons of to-day or even of Stuart times. In fact, until well on in Edward III's reign there was no House of Commons in the strict sense at all. Edward I had summoned an assembly of "Estates." Besides the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, there were three groups of elected representatives—the Proctors of the clergy, the Knights of the Shire, and the Burgesses of the Towns. The Proctors of the Clergy soon withdrew. True to its old principle of the separation of Church and State, the Church from 1337 onwards preferred to vote its taxes in an assembly of its own, called Convocation.[1] Then the Knights and the Burgesses were grouped together in a single House. This was a momentous event. Socially the Knights, or landed gentry, belonged rather to the class of the barons than to that of the burgesses; in fact, in Magna Carta they are termed *barones minores*. Their presence in the House of Commons gave the Lower House not merely an aristocratic character, but also a sense of self-importance and a readiness to seize opportunities for playing a bold part such as the obsequious tradesmen from the towns would never have ventured on by themselves. The Knights were only about seventy in number, and the Burgesses two hundred, but it was the Knights alone who gave the mediaeval Commons such importance as it attained to.

"House of Commons" does not mean House of Common people, but House of Communes or communities, the House whose members represented groups or constituencies. Once again we must beware of modern notions. The mediaeval constituency was not the population of a geographical area. It would be much truer to say that it was a local assembly. The knights were elected in the county courts by the persons who attended the county courts, where the local

[1] This continued until the Puritan Revolution. After the Restoration of Charles II Parliament voted the taxes payable by clergy and laity alike; but a relic of the old system still persists in the law that clergymen of the Church of England (like peers, criminals and lunatics) are not eligible for membership of the House of Commons.

business of the county was transacted; and the burgesses were usually elected by the governing body of the town. Nor must we imagine keen competition between representatives of rival parties for the prize of a seat in the House. There were no such parties, and instead of keen competition there was great unwillingness to undertake the laborious duty of going up to London and voting those unpleasant taxes. Once a member had discharged the duty, he was very much disinclined to undertake it again, and indicated fairly plainly that it was some one else's turn. Hence each House would consist of a fresh body of members, and would feel itself guilty of no inconsistency if, owing to a shift in the balance of power between Crown and Lords, it was cajoled into repealing all the Acts of its predecessor. The whole business of election, both of knights and burgesses, was in the hands of the sheriff, and elections were, more often than not, selections made by the sheriffs themselves.

Edward II and his favourite, Piers Gaveston, lost no time in provoking opposition from the baronage, and in the Parliament of 1310, the barons elected a committee of twenty-one "Lords Ordainers" to draw up a set of rules for the control of the king and the government of the kingdom. These Lords, probably from sheer pride and stupidity, entirely ignored the Commons, who would have been very willing to support them. They despised the example set by Simon de Montfort, and went back to the narrow oligarchy of the Provisions of Oxford. Their leader owed his place, not to his brains or character—for he was as incompetent as Edward II—but to his immense estates. He was Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, son of Edmund Crouchback, younger brother of Edward I, who had begun the unwise policy of endowing the junior members of the royal family with immense baronial estates. For twelve years England was distracted by the feuds of Edward II and Lancaster. Then the king defeated his enemy at Boroughbridge in Yorkshire, put him to death, and, guided perhaps by his friends the

Edward II and Thomas of Lancaster

Despensers, summoned a full Parliament at York, which annulled the Ordinances of 1310 *because* they had not been enacted by Commons as well as Lords. Here we have the first plain statement that the consent of the Commons is necessary for legislation.

Throughout the long, warlike and expensive reign of Edward III we find Parliament increasing its control over the king's finances. When Edward I set up his "taxing machine" he had no intention of debarring himself from raising emergency taxes by other methods. For example, he would lay special taxes on merchants, or on towns within the royal demesne, without consulting Parliament. Gradually Parliament succeeded in stopping up, one by one, these alternative sources of supply and in securing for Parliament a monopoly of control of all emergency taxation—we add "emergency," for it must be remembered that then and for long centuries afterwards the crown drew a "normal" revenue or permanent income from feudal dues, the revenues of royal estates, and certain customs duties (later called tunnage and poundage) which were granted for life.

Control of taxation

At the inglorious end of Edward III's reign we find the first cases of impeachment, the method by which Parliament sought to get rid of ministers it disliked. The king had sunk into his dotage, and the government was in the hands of his third son, the vigorous but incompetent John of Gaunt, who had been made Duke of Lancaster on marrying the heiress of the Lancastrian estates. The Commons of the "Good Parliament" of 1376, emboldened by the patronage of the Black Prince and other nobles, impeached, *i.e.* prosecuted, not Gaunt himself, but some of his underlings, and secured their conviction of various crimes by the House of Lords. Six months later, however, another Parliament, carefully packed with partisans of Gaunt, reversed all the acts of the Good Parliament. So long as parliamentary control involved incidents of this kind, it was a doubtful boon to the country.

The Good Parliament

Such came to be the fixed opinion of the young son of the Black Prince, who, owing to the deaths of his father and grandfather, came to the throne in the year following these two parliaments. The character of Richard II is at once attractive and perplexing. He suffered, in the end, the fate of Edward II, deposition and murder, but he was a very different kind of man. At the time of his accession he was a mere boy of ten. Perhaps his dramatic personal triumph in the crisis of the Peasants' Revolt, when he was only fourteen, gave him an excessive idea of his own powers. Perhaps he learnt his politics from his minister and friend, Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk. De la Pole was an interesting person. His father, a wealthy Hull merchant who had financed several of the undertakings of Edward III, was the first man of the mercantile classes to rise into the highest aristocracy. De la Pole was thus a man of a new type, and he seems to have held that the only way to secure a strong and stable government was to emancipate the Crown from the control of both Lords and Commons—a kind of fourteenth-century Strafford, in fact. But Richard, as he grew up, displayed characteristics which would provoke unnecessary enmities. He was terribly passionate: in his spasms of wrath he would throw his boots out of the window, and smite important persons on the cheek. He was also given to saying things better left unsaid. Like James I, he was full of notions of his own illimitable authority; the laws, he said, were in his own mouth and breast, and he alone could change or frame them.

Richard II

But the great barons, one cannot but feel, never gave him a fair chance. Everything he did was wrong in their eyes, and the fate of Edward II was threatened him almost before he was out of his "teens." The worst of these leaders of opposition was the youngest of his uncles, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester. In 1387, this nobleman and four others, among them John of Gaunt's son, the future Henry IV, modelling their policy on that of the Lords Ordainers "appealed of treason" (*i.e.* prosecuted or impeached) De la Pole and others of

The Lords Appellant

the king's ministers and supporters. De la Pole fled the country and died in exile, but the so-called Merciless Parliament, packed with Gloucester's adherents, gave sentence of death on most of the others. These so-called Lords Appellant then took the government into their own hands. In two years they had discredited themselves, and Richard was able to secure his revenge. He showed, however, surprising prudence and moderation, and installed a kind of "coalition government," in which Gloucester and other Appellants found places.

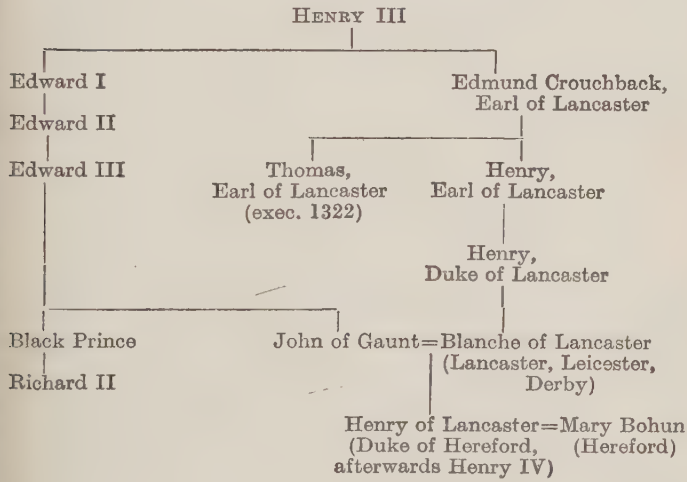
Thus things went on quietly for eight years (1389–97). Then, with most astonishing suddenness, Richard sprang upon his old enemies, the Appellants. Gloucester was murdered, Arundel executed, Warwick imprisoned, Hereford (the future Henry IV) and Norfolk banished; and on John of Gaunt's death the whole of his estates, which should have passed to the exiled Hereford, henceforth Duke of Lancaster, were confiscated to the Crown. But Richard had overshot his mark, and terrified his subjects. The new Duke of Lancaster returned in defiance of the decree of exile; a powerful body of supporters, including the Percies, the guardians of the Scottish frontier, rallied to his side; Richard lost his nerve, and surrendered his crown without a blow. Henry of Lancaster had conquered the kingdom, but he was also careful to ground his claim to it on the decision of Parliament. Parliament was immediately summoned and confronted with an empty throne, and it was only after the two Houses had accepted the deed of abdication which Richard had been forced to draw up, that Henry rose from his seat among the Lords and claimed the throne as due to him by reason of the favour God had shown to his cause. He also alleged a mythical claim by descent based on the allegation already noticed that Edmund Crouchback (see note, page 82) was the elder brother of Edward I. None the less his claim was made before Parliament and for Parliament's acceptance. Parliament had made a king.

Downfall of Richard II

NOTE.

The genealogy shows the extraordinary number of earldoms accumulated in the possession of the man who overthrew Richard II. In those days an earldom was not a mere title, but conferred great revenues and control over wide populations. The new practice of conferring earldoms upon members of the royal family had unfortunately quite obliterated William the Conqueror's policy of conferring broad estates upon none but the guardians of the frontiers.

THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER



(iv) *Froissart, Langland, Chaucer and Wycliffe*

English society of the latter half of the fourteenth century still lives for us in the pages of three great writers—Froissart, Langland and Chaucer; and it was profoundly stirred by the works of a fourth great writer, Wycliffe. No such brilliant group could be produced from any earlier period of our history, and we should have to look forward another two hundred years, to the reign of Elizabeth, before we again found its equal.

Froissart (1338–1410) was not an Englishman, but a native of Flanders, and he wrote in French. But he spent considerable periods of his long life at the English court, drawn thither by the fact that Edward III's queen, Philippa of Hainault, was, like himself, a Fleming. In fact his long, adventurous life illustrates most vividly the surprising cosmopolitanism of upper-class society in the Middle Ages. Froissart goes here, there and everywhere in Western Europe, and seems everywhere at home, and he had a genius for describing the gay societies in which he moved so easily. "No newspaper correspondent, no American interviewer has ever equalled him as a collector of intelligence." He is the greatest of all sporting reporters, whether his subject be the mimic warfare of the tournament or the serious business of the battlefield; and he described both in the same spirit. Neither the virtues nor the vices of patriotic ardour distract him. He favours neither the French nor the English, but rejoices in bold and gallant gentlemen wherever he happens to find them. He has no love of those who could not claim to be gentlemen, but even here his observation is often shrewd, and it was surely a touch of inspiration which led him to compare the peasants of 1381, marching on London, intoxicated with hopes of they knew not what, with those other peasants, three hundred years before, setting off for Jerusalem under Peter the Hermit. Both were looking for the Promised Land, and both were alike astray in the route they had chosen.

Froissart

Of Froissart it would be possible to write a detailed biography. Of Langland (1332–1400?) we know as much as we know of Homer, which is nothing at all, so it is not surprising that some critics have doubted his existence, and have exercised their ingenuity in discovering half a dozen different authors at work in *The Vision of William, concerning Piers the Plowman*, of which various editions appeared between 1360 and 1400. The author depicts himself as a poor wayfaring man, an unemployed (and perhaps unemployable) priest, picking up

Langland

a living by doing clerical odd jobs such as saying masses for the dead, being hired by mourners for the purpose. His enormous poem is written in a style which happily became extinct—rough, rhymeless and alliterative. It is a strange jumble of satire, sermon and allegory, the work of a "vivid and fiery but lurid and confused genius." The author is less a poet than a prophet in the Hebrew sense, surveying the world around him, and finding it very bad. Only a very resolute person could read it all through to-day, but it had a great vogue in the fourteenth century, when its allusions were topical. It was quoted by John Ball in one of his recorded sermons. Two brief quotations will illustrate both the style and the outlook of the poem. The first describes a free labourer of the generation after the Black Death—

> "Labourers that have no land to live on but their hands,
> Deigned not to dine a-day on worts a night old;
> Penny ale will not do, nor a piece of bacon,
> But if it be frosh flesh or fish fried or baked."

The following describes the way the irreligious laity discuss over their dinner tables topics that should be reserved for the clergy—

> "At meat in their mirth, when minstrels are still,
> There tell they of the Trinity a tale or two;
> Thus they drivel at their dais the deity to know,
> And gnaw God with the gorge when their gut is full."

Chaucer (1340–1400) was the son of a London wine merchant. He secured a post in the household of Edward III's second son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence: campaigned in France, was captured, and ransomed, and in later years travelled to Flanders, France and Italy on the King's business. If Froissart is the cosmopolitan visitor, Langland the insular Englishman, Chaucer is the Englishman who is also a "good European." As he was an artist to his finger-tips, and deeply interested in the scholarship of poetry, we can hardly doubt that he owed much, even as a poet, to his foreign travels. We think of *The Canterbury Tales* as a typically English panorama

Chaucer

of English life. So, no doubt, it is. But Chaucer had trained himself to write his masterpiece by a long series of compositions which are imitations of French or Italian models. The most beautiful of these earlier poems is *Troilus and Criseyde*, a love story which mediaeval romance had interwoven with the old Greek tale of Troy. It contains borrowings from both the great Italian writers of the age, Petrarch and Boccaccio.

The most familiar of Chaucer's works is the *Prologue* to *The Canterbury Tales*, a series of rapid and condensed character-sketches of the pilgrims who are setting out from the Tabard Inn in Southwark on their journey to the shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury. We are now more than halfway from the day when Becket became a martyr for his Church, to that later day when his shrine was despoiled by the orders of Henry VIII. Pilgrimage was as popular as ever, but it had lost most of the religious fervour of earlier times, and Chaucer's characters are, in fact, a characteristic assortment of men and women thrown together by the accident that they have all chosen the same kind of holiday. There are several types of churchmen among them: the fat, sporting monk; the friar, who is, of course, an expert in pleasing the ladies; the prioress, who ought to be at home in her convent; the summoner, *i.e.* the prosecutor in the archdeacon's court, who is, of course, a blackmailer; the pardoner, with his sham relics of saints and "pigges bones"; and, in sharp contrast with these, the honest, hard-working country parson. Among the laity we find "the parfit gentil knight," a professional soldier who has seen service all over Europe; the fat country-gentleman, who serves his turn in Parliament as knight of his shire; a group of tradesmen, with their self-important ladies; and the "wife of Bath," a formidable old dame and an inveterate "pilgrim" who has visited all the best shrines in Europe. The tales they tell are as various as their characters.[1]

[1] I have not included quotations from Chaucer, for short quotations would be inadequate, and those who are studying the period will (or should) be reading at least the *Prologue*.

Chaucer's England is a fundamentally cheerful place, whereas Langland's England is wrapped in gloom. Each poet recorded his own impressions, and throws over them the colouring of his own temperament. But on one point they were agreed, namely that the Church was simply riddled with fraud. The leaders of the Church had ceased to lead, and the faith of the Middle Ages was everywhere degenerating into superstition. We saw in the last chapter how the Papacy fell from its honoured position, and became a satellite of the French monarchy at Avignon. It was at Avignon throughout the French wars of Edward III, and was thus, in a very real sense, an enemy institution. Papal taxation of the English Church was money paid to the national enemy. So it is not surprising that Parliament entered on a course of anti-papal legislation. The same years as produced the Statute of Labourers, produced also the first Statutes of Provisors and *Praemunire*[1] (1351 and 1353), the former prohibiting papal appointments to English benefices, and the latter prohibiting appeals to Rome from the English Church courts. Neither statute was enforced. The Pope was, after all, the vicar of Christ, and no substitute for him could be suggested without blasphemy. Englishmen grumbled, but they could not bring themselves to alter their practice until they first learnt to alter their theory.

Decay of the Church

Meanwhile a very learned Oxford scholar, John Wycliffe (1328–1384), a Yorkshireman and for a time Master of Baliol College, was slowly puzzling out, in a series of complicated Latin treatises, a new theory of the nature of the Church—a theory which, a hundred and fifty years later, conquered half Europe under the name of Protestantism. Wycliffe's starting point was much the same as that of St. Francis a hundred and fifty years before

Wycliffe

[1] *Praemunire* is a corruption of the Latin *praemonere*, to forewarn, the word used in the formula of certain legal writs. Thus it came to be used to denote the offences covered by such writs, and was further restricted to writs used in Church courts. (The subject is too technical and difficult for adequate explanation here. See article on it in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* if further information is required.)

him. He attributed the evils of the Church to the wealth, power and consequent worldliness of its leaders. That power was perhaps decreasing as laymen became more and more competent to discharge political duties, but the wealth was still increasing as the continuous stream of bequests from the pious and the superstitious flowed in. To bequeath wealth to the Church was a cheap method of pleading for mercy beyond the grave. St. Francis had been content to found a society dedicated to poverty. Wycliffe boldly announced that it was the duty of king and parliament to relieve the Church of its wealth, for the good of both Church and State, but primarily, from Wycliffe's standpoint, for the good of the Church.

Here was a policy which appealed to many besides those who, like Wycliffe himself, were concerned to restore the Church to godliness. In the last years of Edward III John of Gaunt was the leader of the war party, and was at his wits' end to secure funds for carrying on the French war. Wycliffe's doctrine of national disendowment of the Church opened up a prospect fascinating beyond the dreams of avarice, and the learned Oxford recluse found himself for a brief period a popular pamphleteer and the protégé of the most powerful noble in the kingdom. When Wycliffe was summoned in 1377 (the year after the Good Parliament and the last year of Edward III's reign) to answer for his heresies before Archbishop Simon of Sudbury (afterwards the victim of the Peasants' Revolt) in St. Paul's Cathedral, he was attended by John of Gaunt and his retinue, and the investigation ended in a brawl and a riot.

Alliance with John of Gaunt

But the strange alliance was as temporary as it deserved to be. Wycliffe was working out other ideas, from which men like John of Gaunt shrank back with superstitious horror. After the Peasants' Revolt, men of property, both lay and clerical, made up their quarrels; and Wycliffe, after figuring for a moment as a popular pamphleteer advocating what would have been simply a pillage of the Church, became the founder of a

Wycliffe's religion

despised sect of mediaeval puritans, whom we call the Lollards.

The immense edifice of clerical wealth and power was built up, as Wycliffe saw, upon the assumption that the priesthood was divinely endowed with miraculous powers. Was this the truth? In the course of many treatises, filled with elaborate argumentation, Wycliffe came to answer this question more and more decisively in the negative. The only true priest of God was the man of godly life. The sacrament of the Mass was invalid except when both priest and communicant were godly. Confession and penance were superfluous, for the only real repentance was the change in the sinner's heart. Preaching was of more avail than sacraments; the Bible a higher authority than the Church. Wycliffe, driven from Oxford to spend his last years in his country rectory of Lutterworth, turned from the leaders of politics and learning, to the poor and the simple; re-wrote the substance of his learned Latin treatises in simple English tracts; undertook, in collaboration with his friends, an English translation of the Bible; and sent out his disciples as "poor priests" begging their bread like the early Franciscans. They spread his doctrines over the country.

The early Wycliffites were not apparently of the stuff of which martyrs are made. When brought to trial by bishops they abjured their heresies. Some returned to the fold of the Church and rose to high preferment: others resumed their work as "poor priests" in dioceses blest with less active bishops. But after 1400, the burnings began. One of the first was a tailor of Evesham named Badby. He was brought to London and confronted with two archbishops, eight bishops, the Duke of York, and the Lord Chancellor: but he would not recant. Nor would he recant when the Prince of Wales, the future Henry V, came to argue with him at the stake. Henry V was rigorously orthodox, and set himself, as soon as he became king, to strike down Lollardy in the person of its most notable adherent, a wealthy and distinguished

The new sect

soldier named Sir John Oldcastle; but the knight proved as resolute as the tailor. And so the dismal story goes on. The victims were few, but the feeling that all was not well with the Church was widespread, as is proved by the fact that in 1450 Bishop Pecock of Chichester published a book quaintly entitled *The Represser of over-much blaming of the Clergy*. Pecock was a good man, who saw the Wycliffite point of view and sought to meet it with sympathy as well as confutation. His brother bishops detected more sympathy than confutation in the work, convicted him of heresy, and sentenced him to imprisonment for life. Seventy years later, when Luther's doctrines began to spread in England, the Bishop of London wrote, "It is no question of some pernicious novelty; it is only that new arms are being added to the great band of Wycliffite heretics."

CHAPTER V

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY (1399–1485)

THE fifteenth century, so far as English history is concerned, is a bad period in more than one sense of the word —bad, in that it is largely a catalogue of crimes and follies; bad, also, in that most of it is dull. The crown is at its weakest; the great nobles are more powerful than ever before, except in Stephen's reign, and use their power in such a way as to make good government impossible; the House of Commons, also more powerful at the beginning of the period than ever before, shows itself unfit to use the power it has secured. The middle of the period is filled with a futile repetition of Edward III's attempt to conquer France. Its latter end is filled with the carnival of violence that goes by the name of the Wars of the Roses. The Church is subservient to the crown, and active only in persecuting the Lollards. In literature there are no worthy successors to Chaucer. What is really important and interesting in the history of fifteenth-century England lies below the surface of external events—the slow, silent growth of trade and town life, which was laying the foundations of the modern "middle classes." In the wider world of Europe the fifteenth century was an age of great events: the Italian Renaissance, the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, the beginnings of the exploration of the seas which culminated in the voyages of Columbus and Vasco da Gama, the establishment of strong monarchies in France and Spain. These events, though contemporary with our dismal faction fights of York and Lancaster, hardly affected England until the Tudor period. They are therefore discussed, not at the end of this Book, but at the beginning of the next.

(i) *The Second Half of the Hundred Years' War*

Richard II had signed a thirty years' truce with France in 1396, but it was not destined to last for more than half that space of time. The French were, perhaps, the first offenders, for they sent help to the Welsh rebel, Owen Glendower, in 1404. Soon afterwards the state of France presented a strong temptation to the English government to undertake reprisals. The French king, Charles VI, suffered from "midsummer madness"; he went mad in the summer and recovered what passed for sanity in the winter; and two rival factions, Burgundians and Orleanists (or Armagnacs), fought for the control of his government. Both invited English help. Henry IV sent a contingent to support Burgundy in 1411, and another to support Orleans in 1412. The lesson of these campaigns was not lost on the young Prince of Wales, who became Henry V in the next year. France was in a state of collapse. If the king of England was to conquer France, now or never was the time to do it.

Breaches of the truce with France

Henry V was what, in modern jargon, would be called a militarist. He was not only a very keen and capable soldier; he loved war and conquest, and firmly believed in them as supremely good things, and the chief and proper aim of statesmanship. His other characteristics were such as are often found in combination with this type of character. He was honourable according to his lights, but ruthless in his dealings with the enemy, utterly unscrupulous in negotiation, a pious Churchman, a keen persecutor of heretics, and as firmly convinced that God intended him to conquer France as ever any Crusader had been that God intended him to conquer Jerusalem.

Henry V

This belief that God was on his side becomes all the stranger when we put the campaign of Agincourt in the place it must always occupy, not in English, but in European History. Ever since 1378 there had been schism in the Church, two Popes, one at Avignon and one at Rome, each securing the allegiance of half the Catholic world, and denouncing the other as

The Council of Constance

the emissary of the devil. In order to end this appalling scandal, a Great Council of the Church, in many respects the greatest that has ever met, was assembled at Constance in 1414. Its task was to end the schism and to "reform the Church in Head and Members." Delegates, both lay and clerical, from every Catholic country attended the Council. One of the chief difficulties in the way of its success was the political enmity of the various nations represented. Now Henry V, as a severely pious and orthodox person, ought to have done everything in his power to promote the success of the Council. Yet he chose the crucial year of its sessions, when it had succeeded in deposing the rival popes and was proceeding to the more difficult task of reformation of the Church, to renew the war between two of the chief nations represented at Constance. And, in fact, the Council failed. If Henry V had lived a hundred years later, he would have regarded Martin Luther with horror; yet he had done what lay in his power to make Martin Luther inevitable.

The first of Henry's campaigns is the most famous of all, the campaign of Agincourt. Yet Agincourt itself was an afterthought. Henry, as a scientific soldier, knew that in those days of great fortresses victories in the open field brought more glory than solid profit. His plan was a series of sieges—Harfleur, Rouen and perhaps Paris. He relied, of course, for much on the divisions of France and his alliance with Burgundy. But the task proved too great. He did not leave England till August 1st, and Harfleur, at the mouth of the Seine, did not fall till September 22. To attempt Rouen was impossible, at that time of year and with the forces at his disposal. So he fell back on the plan of a rapid eight days' march to Calais, for purposes of demonstration. Military experts consider that he hoped to avoid a battle, for his force was very inadequate. Fate, however, was kinder. The French made almost every conceivable mistake and simply delivered themselves into his hands. Agincourt was the most astounding of all the victories of the long-bow. It was another and greater Poitiers.

Agincourt

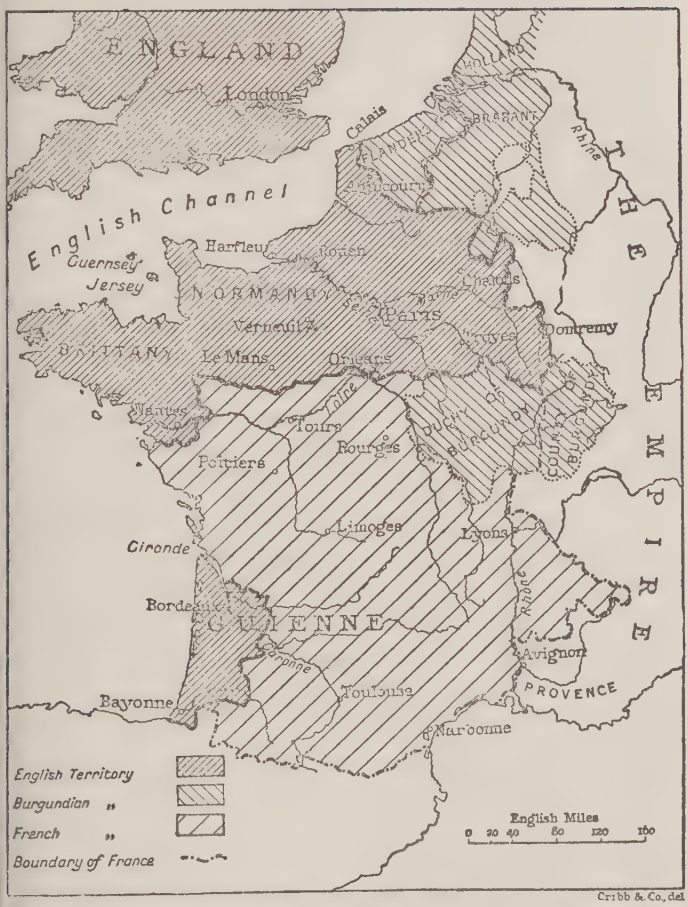
The later campaigns were really more important. In 1418 Henry captured Rouen, but the decisive event was not an English victory, but a French murder, the odiously treacherous murder of the Duke of Burgundy by order of the Dauphin, at a conference at Montereau. This brought over the party of the Queen-mother to Henry's side, in opposition to her own son. By the Treaty of Troyes (1420) Henry V was recognised as heir to the French throne. Meanwhile he was to marry the French king's daughter, and to rule all the northern half of France. It only remained to conquer the south. Two years later he died, a few months before the death of his insane father-in-law. His misguided abilities had launched his country upon an impossible task, under the weight of which she was to stagger for thirty years and finally to fall into anarchy.

Treaty of Troyes

For eight years after the death of Henry V the English maintained their ascendancy. Burgundy was a firm ally, the Duke of Bedford, Henry V's brother, proved himself a competent soldier, with a singular gift for winning French affections such as Henry V had never possessed, and, on the other side, the French claimant, Charles VII, showed neither ability nor energy. Then occurred that famous intervention, which some said came direct from God and others direct from the devil; which all now agree to have been the means of kindling the flame of French patriotism which has never since been extinguished. France had fallen a prey to England because she had never been more than a loose federation of feudal provinces. Joan of Arc, by her brief life and terrible death, taught the French-speaking peoples to think of themselves as Frenchmen, and from that moment English dominion in France was doomed.

Joan of Arc

The Maid's career was short. She first appeared at Court in March 1429. She led the attack which relieved Orleans in May. She had "the Dauphin" crowned at Reims in July. She was repulsed before Paris in September; captured at Compiègne, owing to the jealousy and half-hearted support



Note. This map shows the Lancastrian Empire at its greatest extent, at the time of the siege of Orleans in 1429.

of the French leaders, in May 1430; sold by the Burgundians to the English, and, after an elaborate trial for heresy and witchcraft, burnt in May 1431. It is against the evidence to suppose that she showed any marked military genius. The English siege of Orleans was, owing to the small size of the besieging force, a hopeless undertaking; 4000 men were trying to cover a front of five miles. Only bravery and resolution was needed to end it, and that was what the Maid supplied. Her attack on Paris proved that she had little conception of what was possible and what impossible in warfare. Her failure to conciliate the goodwill of the French leaders is not hard to understand. Great noblemen do not like taking orders from vehement and outspoken peasant-girls, and they like it the less the more incompetent they are. The action of her persecutors, again, is comprehensible enough. Belief in supernatural inspiration was universal. Joan claimed it for herself, and thereby affronted the Church, which claimed a monopoly of divine guidance. Since the Church was willing to make the quarrel her own, the English leaders would have been more than human if they had interfered on the other side. The tragedy came about naturally enough, and we need not look for a villain to the piece. None the less, the French who let her fall, the Burgundians who sold her, the Churchmen who condemned her, and the English who burnt her, played their parts in one of the most painful atrocities of history.

The end of the war

It is impossible to measure with any exactness the influence of the Maid's life and death on the subsequent course of the war, for other events followed which made powerful contributions to the doom of the English ascendancy. In 1435 Bedford died, and Burgundy made peace with France by the Treaty of Arras. Paris was regained in 1436. Thenceforth the English lost steadily. The last campaign, that of 1453, contained the only battle of the war that was decided by gunpowder.[1]

[1] Cannon, and also musketry, were used on a small scale in the Wars of the Roses, but without decisive results. The last great

The English made a frontal attack on an entrenched position at Castillon, and were broken by artillery fire. After the battle, Bordeaux, which had been English since the days of Henry II, surrendered. Nothing remained but Calais. In the same year Henry VI had the first attack of that midsummer madness which he doubtless inherited from his French grandfather, and the English equivalents of Burgundy and Orleans were about to begin their civil wars. France was at last left in peace.

Later wars with France

We may well add an appendix to the long story, which began neither with Henry V nor Edward III, but with William the Conqueror, the first English king to rule French territory. In a lucid interval in the midst of the Wars of the Roses Edward IV made an invasion of France in alliance with a new Duke of Burgundy, but consented to be bought out by Louis XI before he had fired a shot (1475), returning to England with a French pension such as was afterwards paid by Louis XIV to Charles II. The crafty Henry VII repeated this performance in 1492. Henry VIII, more ambitious and reckless, had two French campaigns at the beginning of his reign, winning the so-called Battle of the Spurs in 1513, and another at the end, in which he captured Boulogne, which remained English for a few years. Then it was lost again, and the loss of Calais quickly followed (1558). Elizabeth made one ill-advised and half-hearted attempt to recover it, in alliance with the Huguenots, who might be regarded as the sixteenth-century equivalent of the Dukes of Burgundy (1563). Thenceforth, for more than a hundred years, England and France were generally allies, the enemies of both being Spain and afterwards the Dutch. When, from 1688 onwards to Waterloo, England and France met in a second Hundred Years' War, the prize was not French provinces, but empire in America and India.

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victory of the long bow was Flodden, 1513, just two hundred and fifteen years after its first great victory at Falkirk, against the same antagonists.

(ii) *The Failure of Parliament and the Wars of the Roses*

Henry IV and the Percies

Henry IV was merely a great nobleman of royal blood who had seized the crown, and those who had helped him to perform this feat expected a more liberal share of the profits than Henry was prepared to allow them. Thus from the moment of his accession he was beset with difficulties. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown";—such is the summary of his experiences that Shakespeare puts into his mouth. His chief baronial supporters, the Percies, soon became his chief enemies. The Earl of Northumberland, the guardian of the Scottish border, and his son, the famous Hotspur, entered into alliance with the Welsh rebel, Glendower, with the object of dethroning Henry in favour of the little Earl of March, who not only had a better claim than Henry to succeed the murdered Richard, so far as the genealogical table could settle the matter, but also, being a mere boy, would be unable to quarrel with the "king-makers." But Henry struck fast and hard. Hotspur was defeated and killed at Shrewsbury (1403); Northumberland, after further treasons, was killed at Bramham Moor (1408), and the resources of Glendower were gradually reduced by a series of campaigns undertaken by the warlike youth who afterwards became Henry V.

The "Lancastrian experiment"

It was easier to break the Percies than to satisfy the House of Commons. We generally reckon that our modern "parliamentary government" began with William III, because, being a Parliament-made king, he could not claim any powers that Parliament did not choose to allow him. Henry IV occupied, two hundred and ninety years earlier, very much the same position, and the House of Commons never forgot that he was, in a sense, their creature, and that, if the Percies had supplied the forces, Parliament had supplied the law which made him king. Hence followed what has been called the "Lancastrian experiment" in parliamentary government. On paper it looks like a very pretty imitation of modern constitutional practice. The king consented to choose such councillors as Parliament recommended to him—which is, in essentials, the principle of modern Cabinet government. He

also consented to an annual audit of the royal accounts by the House of Commons—which corresponds with the modern system by which the House of Commons debates in turn the expenditure of each government department. Henry V continued his father's deferential policy, and laid his foreign treaties before Parliament for their approval.

All these arrangements, and others, supplied useful precedents to the Stuart Parliaments when they tried to show that their claims against James I and Charles I were, in reality, "ancient liberties." But the results of parliamentary control in the fifteenth century were anything but satisfactory. These "representatives of the people" (or, as they often were, nominees of the sheriffs) did not display an intelligence equal to their self-importance. They abounded in petty, vexatious criticism. They could hamper the government, but they could not direct it. They could make it weak, but they could not make it wise.[1] Hence a "lack of governance" at the centre, and, as a consequence, a baronage growing more and more powerful and insubordinate. In modern times parliamentary government means House of Commons government, even though, in the century and a half before the Great Reform Bill of 1832, the House of Commons was largely controlled by borough-owning lords. But in the fifteenth century the lords relied less on their control of boroughs than on their control of armed retainers. After the death of Henry V the breakdown of "the Lancastrian experiment" began. Henry VI was a child, and even when he grew to manhood he remained a child so far as any comprehension of his political duties was concerned. Powerful nobles struggled for the control of the government, and, as control of the government meant responsibility for the management of the French war, each faction discredited itself in turn. When the war was over, the fighting men came back to England, thoroughly demoralised by their long apprenticeship to methods of violence. The failure of the "Lancastrian experiment" and the failure of Henry V's

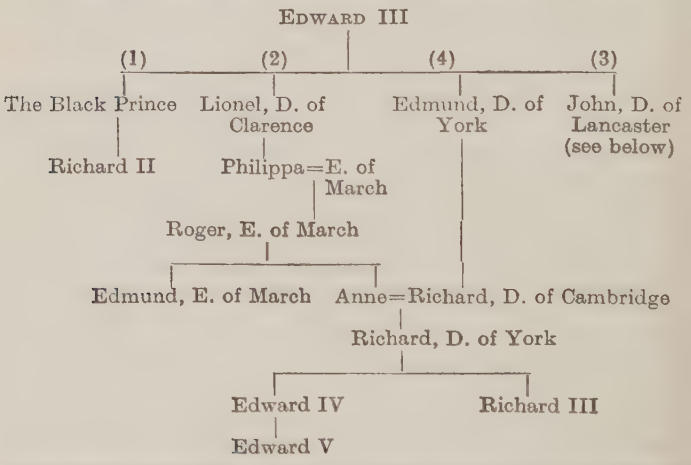
[1] In 1404 we find Henry requesting the sheriffs to return no lawyers to the forthcoming Parliament! However, the "unlearned Parliament" proved every bit as critical and talkative as its predecessors and successors.

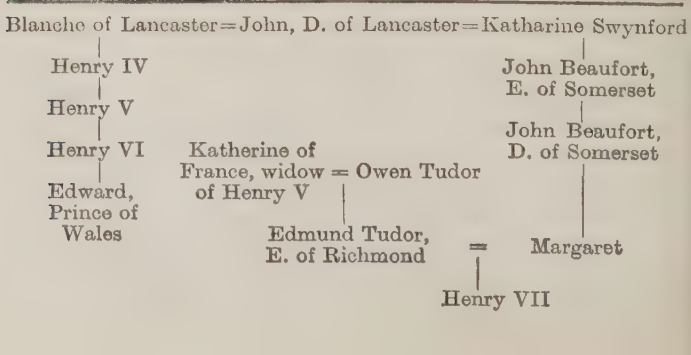
attempt to conquer France produced between them the Wars of the Roses. The last battle in France preceded by only two years (1453–1455) the first battle in England.

The Wars of the Roses

We think of the Wars of the Roses as a struggle for the crown, but they began as a struggle for the place of chief minister to Henry VI. Henry was ruled by his vigorous and obstinate queen, Margaret of Anjou, who persisted in entrusting the government to Somerset, the head of the great family of the Beauforts, illegitimate descendants of John of Gaunt, and cousins of the Lancastrian line. In opposition to these stood York,

THE HOUSES OF LANCASTER, YORK AND TUDOR





who, being descended from Clarence, the elder brother of John of Gaunt, represented the legitimate line of succession to Richard II. Supporting York was Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, afterwards famous as the "King-maker." Warwick was an able man who did good service as Governor of Calais; he is the nearest approach to a "great man" in this bad period, but he owed his power, not to his personal qualities, but to the careful calculated marriage alliances of the Neville family, which gave him his vast estates and his immense armies of retainers. Warwick was the multi-millionaire of an age which reckoned wealth in soldiers. In the previous volume of this history we saw how the Roman armies of the last century of the Republic were, for all practical purposes, not the armies of the state, but the armies of the great generals, Marius and Sulla, Caesar and Pompey. When these generals quarrelled on questions of politics they brought their disputes for settlement, not to the Senate, but to the battlefield. So it was in the Wars of the Roses. Edward III and Henry V after him could never have invaded France again and again unless they had called upon the great nobles to act as their recruiting officers. The nobles maintained contingents for the king, and gave them, not the king's uniform, but their own "livery." Thus the various contingents which had fought together against France were quite ready to follow their paymasters against one another.

In 1453 Henry VI had his first attack of "midsummer madness," and York, as the first prince of the royal blood, secured the position of regent. The king's insanity lasted a year and a half. When he recovered, the Regency ended; the Queen at once secured York's dismissal from the control of the government, and installed Somerset in his place. York and Warwick called up their forces and defeated the Queen and Somerset (who was killed) at St. Albans, 1455.

More alternations of madness and sanity followed, with the same alternations of power and impotence for York. The situation was intolerable, and York fell back on his claim, not hitherto put forward, to be the rightful king of England by descent, branding all

Accession of Edward IV

the Lancastrians as usurpers, and thus challenging the power of Parliament to make a king. More battles followed (1459–1461). York was defeated and killed at Wakefield, but his son and heir, aided by Warwick, inflicted a crushing defeat on the Lancastrians at Towton, came in triumph to London, and was crowned as Edward IV.

The struggle now entered on a new phase. Warwick expected to control the young king whose fortune he had made exactly as the Percies had expected to control Henry IV sixty years before. Edward IV was determined to emancipate himself from his benefactor, and to rule through ministers who would be his servants, not his masters. Warwick, driven from power, turned to ally himself with the Lancastrian queen whom he had driven out of the country. So civil war was renewed (1469–1471). Warwick invaded England from France. Edward fled to Flanders, now part of the great Duchy of Burgundy, but quickly returned. Warwick was defeated and killed at Barnet; Margaret and the Lancastrian Prince of Wales were defeated and killed at Tewkesbury; and Henry VI murdered in the Tower—for historians are unanimous in rejecting the official announcement that he died "of pure displeasure and melancholy."

Thenceforth Edward IV reigned for twelve years at ease (1471–1483), a clever, idle, bad man. The only notable feature of his reign is the decay of Parliament. Under the Lancastrian kings Parliament had met almost every year, and had been actively critical. Under Edward IV it met but seldom, and then only to do the king's business. Edward owed his throne possibly to legitimacy, certainly to violence, but in no way to Parliament; he lived largely on the confiscated estates of Lancastrian nobles and on his French pension (see page 127), so Parliament was the less able to control him by means of "the power of the purse."

In 1483 Edward died, leaving a son of twelve. What followed is a very familiar story. The worst of periods of revolution is that they breed the type of man who believes that anything and everything can be done by violence. Such a man was Richard of Gloucester, younger brother of Edward IV and uncle of the

The usurpation of Richard III

new king. Gloucester was determined to be king himself; and why not?—only a few murders were required. The story of the wicked uncle's career from this point onwards reads like a bad melodrama. Edward V and his brother were murdered in the Tower, and the most conspicuous of their supporters shared their fate, one after another. But it would not do. Atrocious criminals have maintained their thrones when, in spite of their atrocities, they have represented in their persons some great patriotic principle or some ancient and semi-divine tradition. Richard III represented neither, and the murder of the young princes was an atrocity which shocked the public conscience even in that age of blood. All eyes turned to the most promising alternative king, Henry of Richmond, the representative, through his mother, of the Beaufort line. Richmond was living in France, and a powerful band of exiles gathered round him. In August 1485, just two years after the murder of the princes, their avenger landed in Wales. Fifteen days later he met and defeated Richard III at Bosworth, and was crowned on the battlefield with the dead king's crown. The Tudor period had begun, which was to carry England through so many undreamt-of adventures up to such dazzling glories. The battle of Bosworth lies just half-way between the Peasants' Revolt and the Spanish Armada—half-way between Chaucer and Shakespeare.

The Wars of the Roses made surprisingly little difference to the life of the vast majority of the population, who took no part and little interest in them. There were no sieges, for no town was sufficiently attached to either party to stand a siege on its behalf. Casualties among the rank and file were, in most battles, slight, for the beaten side was ready enough to run away, and the victors had no desire to prevent their doing so. Among the leaders, however, the casualties were very heavy indeed. This was partly due to the immensely heavy armour of a generation seeking in vain to protect itself against gunpowder. The leaders did not run away because, in fact, they could not run. Another cause of heavy casualties was

Destruction of the nobility

the venomous hatred the leaders on either side bore one another; they entered battle in the spirit of that ancient king of Syria who ordered his men to "fight neither with small nor great, but only with the king of Israel." Thus we read that, at the battle of Northampton (1460), "less than 300 were killed, but these included nearly all the Lancastrian nobles that took part in the battle." After the Lancastrian victory which followed, at Wakefield, the queen set the precedent, followed in most of the later battles, of executing the most important men among the prisoners. Thus it is perfectly true to say that the Wars of the Roses killed off the fifteenth-century nobility. Whole families were extinguished and their estates confiscated. The old aristocracy disappeared, and its place was to be filled by Tudor creations of a quite different character and outlook.

(iii) *Trade and Towns*

The fifteenth century has deservedly a bad name with those who look at it from the standpoint of politics or religion, but so far as trade and industry are concerned, it was a century of steady progress. England was wealthier in the fifteenth century than it had ever been before.

Far the greatest of English industries right down to the end of the eighteenth century (except, of course, the primary industry of providing food by means of agriculture) was the woollen industry. Here we must distinguish at once the industry of sheep-farming for the production of raw wool and the industries of spinning and weaving for the production of woollen goods. Even in Roman times English wool was recognised as being of specially fine quality, but until nearly the end of the Middle Ages we sent most of our wool abroad to Flanders to be worked up into woollen fabrics. Early manufacture at home was chiefly in the hands of Flemings, who were encouraged to settle in the country by the Norman kings. Edward III, always patriotic, if not always wise,

The woollen industry

made special efforts to encourage the weaving industry, clothing his own person in English cloth as an example to his subjects. He even made the experiment of prohibiting the export of English raw wool. But the English weavers could neither cope with the supply of wool nor meet the demand for goods, and the State could not afford to do without the heavy tax on exported wool; so the prohibition was abandoned. It was one of those amateurish experiments which would not have been made in an age which possessed adequate economic knowledge.

There are therefore three industries to be considered—that of the sheep-farmer, that of the merchant who collected, exported and sold the raw wool abroad, and that of the home manufacturer of woollen goods. Of the first something has been already said in the section which showed how the Black Death stimulated sheep-farming at the expense of agriculture. We pass to the other two.

The export of wool

During the first two centuries after the Conquest the export of wool was chiefly conducted by foreigners, but under Edward I English exporters began to take over the trade, and formed the gild or company of Merchants of the Staple (wool being the "staple" or chief export). The Staplers did not form a single firm in the modern sense of the word, for each made his own profits; on the other hand, they acted in close co-operation, and were controlled both by their own rules and by the king's regulations. Some kind of co-operation was necessary in view of pirates, and the government controlled the trade in order that it might the more easily tax it. Certain towns, sometimes in England, sometimes in Flanders, but eventually, throughout the fifteenth century, Calais, were appointed to be Staple towns, at which buyers and sellers must meet and do their business. The typical Stapler would go his rounds through the sheep farms of whatever district he favoured during the shearing season, buy and pack his wool, bring it down to the port, where it would be weighed, examined and taxed by the customs officials, and take it across to Calais (when the Staple was

fixed there), where he would sell it to the weavers from Bruges and Ghent and the other weaving cities. Towards the end of the fifteenth century the Staplers were beginning to feel the competition of a rival company, the Merchant Adventurers, who bought the woollen goods from English manufacturers[1] and sold them to foreign retailers.

Manufacture of woollen goods grew up mainly in East Anglia, the west of England, and southern Yorkshire. The industry involved a great many distinct processes requiring different kinds of skill and performed by different workers,—spinning, carding, weaving, fulling (*i.e.* cleaning), "finishing" and dyeing. It was natural that there should grow up a class of "middlemen" who bought and sold between these various groups of workers, and these middlemen gradually became in fact "capitalists." Instead of buying from (for example) the weavers and selling to the fullers, they bought the wool outright from the sheep farmers and paid wages to the workers who performed the various processes. As they grew rich, they were, of course, accused, rightly or wrongly, of making excessive profits and paying inadequate wages. Then they began to consider that they could get better work if they brought their employees under their own supervision, and so we get the beginnings of the "factory system" long before there was any steam-driven machinery —when, in fact, manufacturing was still really "manufacturing," or making by hand. The full development of this belongs to the early Tudor period, and its greatest exponent was John Winchcomb, "Jack of Newbury," whose industrial prowess was celebrated in a popular poem—

Woollen manufacture

> "Within one room, being large and long
> There stood two hundred looms full strong.
> Two hundred men, the truth[2] is so,
> Wrought in these looms all in a row, etc."

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[1] By an extraordinary transformation the word *manu*facturer has now come to mean one who makes articles by machinery. We here use the word in its old sense of one who makes articles with his own hands and hand-tools.

[2] Probably a considerable exaggeration of the truth.

This captain of industry, we are told, led a hundred of his own 'prentices to Flodden, feasted the king and queen in his own house, refused a knighthood, and built part of Newbury church.

We have seen how Hubert Walter began the process of granting charters of self-government to towns, and how, sixty years later, Simon de Montfort summoned representatives of the towns to his Parliament. Three-quarters of the House of Commons consisted of representatives of the towns. These political facts merely recognised the growing importance of the towns in the economic life of the nation. Most of the towns were, of course, very small, but they were none the less proud and self-sufficient, and their great aim was not to contribute to the welfare of the nation (of which they must have had only the dimmest conceptions), but to secure the welfare of their own town by the exclusion of "foreigners," *i.e.* persons from other towns or from the countryside, from getting a share of the town business. This duty was undertaken by the Merchant Gilds, which sprang up in most towns in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and, after the grant of self-government, became practically identical in most cases with the governing body of the town. This exclusive policy was not in accord with national interests, and we find Edward III, for example, doing what he can to break it down.

Merchant Gilds

Distinct from, but not opposed to, the Merchant Gilds were the Craft Gilds, or organisations of workers in each craft or trade. Here the aim is, again, exclusiveness—to eliminate competition of outsiders, to enforce regulations regarding prices, wages, apprenticeship. In the fifteenth century the Merchant Gilds disappear, and their place is taken by the leading Craft Gilds acting in co-operation. These gilds have, of course, nothing in common with modern trade unions; it would be truer to say that they were the ancestors of modern federations of employers. The main difference is that they were municipal, not national.

Craft Gilds

London was, in the Middle Ages, so very much the greatest of English towns that it requires separate treatment. How great its preponderance was we can measure from the fact that in 1397 London was taxed at £6,666, the next two cities being Bristol £800 and Norwich £333. Again, in the scheme for the graduated poll-tax of 1379 (which produced the Peasants' Revolt), the Mayor of London ranked with earls and bishops in being assessed at £4, and the aldermen with barons at £2.

London

London's first charter of self-government came from Henry I, but if we could see Henry I's London it would strike us as no more than an overgrown village of wooden houses with thatched roofs, and its life was still so closely bound up with agriculture that the sessions of the town-court were suspended during the harvest season. A hundred years later, at the time of Magna Carta, it was becoming a very different sort of place, and was beginning to assert its great and consistent influence in politics. Mediaeval London was distinctly "radical." It supported the Charter against John, Simon de Montfort against Henry III, the Good Parliament against John of Gaunt, Henry of Lancaster against Richard II, and York against Margaret of Anjou, and in every case its support was of decisive importance. In later days it supported the Puritans against Charles I and William of Orange against James II.

While the city grew as a centre of trade and industry its government passed more and more into the hands of the leading members of the great City Companies, many of which still survive to-day as trustees of charities and as dining-clubs. London government was, in fact, an oligarchy of wealth, a plutocracy. The corporation fought for its "liberties" against kings and princes, such as Henry III and John of Gaunt, who were rash enough to attempt to interfere with them; but it fought with equal tenacity against any attempt of the cockney *demos* to secure "liberties" of a more democratic character. We have only space to select a few examples of both these characteristics.

The London oligarchy

In 1196 a certain William FitzOsbert, surnamed Longbeard, protested that, in assessing the taxes of the citizens, the corporation overtaxed the poor and undertaxed themselves. He convened meetings of the poor at St. Paul's and inflamed their minds with revolutionary harangues. The corporation complained to Hubert Walter, who had the demagogue arrested and hanged.

Two hundred years later (1381) the poor secured a more powerful champion owing to a falling out among their masters. There was a great feud between the victualling gilds, such as the grocers and fishmongers, and the gilds of the clothing trades. John of Northampton, draper, was elected mayor in the time of excitement immediately after the Peasants' Revolt, and used his power to reduce food prices in a most drastic manner. For two years he held power, until Richard II intervened, secured by force the election of a fishmonger, and banished the popular leader to the lonely fortress of Tintagel.

The most daring attempt to destroy the liberties of the corporation was undertaken by John of Gaunt in the period of reaction that followed the temporary triumph of the Good Parliament, *i.e.* in 1377, the last year of Edward III. The new Parliament, packed with John of Gaunt's supporters, introduced a Bill to curtail the liberties of the corporation, but such a formidable riot ensued that the whole project was dropped. The villain of the piece narrowly escaped being killed in the streets, and with him Percy, afterward Northumberland and the king-maker of Henry IV.

The great merchants of that period were, indeed, powerful and resolute persons. Sir John Philpot, for example, Mayor in 1378, finding that the government would take no steps to put down certain Scottish pirates, equipped a fleet at his own expense, sallied forth, and fell upon the Scots at Scarborough, capturing all their ships and fifteen Spanish ships as well. The most famous of all the merchant princes of mediaeval London, Dick Whittington, belongs to the next generation. He was, like many other merchants, a gentleman by birth, being the son of a knight of Gloucester-

shire. The legend which represents him as a poor orphan, starting with no property in the world but his cat, is an invention of later ages, popularised by an Elizabethan play which took him for its hero. He was four times mayor, and died in 1423, leaving a vast fortune to charitable purposes. He made large loans to Henry IV and Henry V and, so they say, when he gave a banquet to the latter king, he completed the entertainment by burning royal bonds for £60,000 which he had taken up and discharged.

Thus while kings and nobles were active in destruction, merchants were equally active in accumulation. But we should be unjust to both classes if we assumed that their main were their only interests. The Renaissance was at its height in Italy, and even the barbarous folk of the Wars of the Roses were not untouched by it. Caxton set up his printing press in Edward IV's England, and he would not have moved his press from Bruges to London if he could not have found a market there for his wares. Edward IV gave him £20. The "butcher-earl" of Worcester, one of the most bloodthirsty performers in the Wars of the Roses, was a translator of Cicero and Caesar as well as an author of original work both in Latin and English. Caxton praises his "cunning in science and moral virtue." And in the generation before Caxton, Humphrey of Gloucester, youngest brother of Henry V, and a most mischievous politician, was a great collector of books, many of which he presented to the University of Oxford. The new age was treading upon the heels of the old.

Beginnings of the Renaissance

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D.	1066.	*William I.*
,,	1086.	Domesday Book.
,,	1087.	*William II.*
,,	1100.	*Henry I.*
,,	1107.	Treaty between Henry I and Anselm.
,,	1135.	*Stephen.*
,,	1154.	*Henry II.*
,,	1170.	Murder of Becket.
,,	1173.	The last great Feudal rebellion.

A.D. 1187. Saladin captures Jerusalem.
,, 1189. *Richard I.*
,, 1199. *John.*
,, 1204. Loss of Normandy.
,, 1206. Innocent III appoints Langton Archbishop.
,, 1215. Magna Carta.
,, 1216. *Henry III.*
,, 1250. Death of the Emperor Frederick II.
,, 1265. Simon de Montfort's Parliament.
,, 1272. *Edward I.*
,, 1282. Conquest of Wales.
,, 1292. Scottish Crown awarded to John Baliol.
,, 1295. "Complete and Model" Parliament.
,, 1307. *Edward II.*
,, 1314. Battle of Bannockburn.
,, 1322. Parliament declares void the Ordinances of the "Ordainers."
,, 1327. *Edward III.*
,, 1340. Battle of Sluys.
,, 1346. Battle of Crecy.
,, 1349. The Black Death.
,, 1356. Battle of Poitiers.
,, 1360. Peace of Bretigni, or Calais.
,, 1376. The Good Parliament.
,, 1377. *Richard II.*
,, 1381. The Peasants' Revolt.
,, 1384. Death of Wycliffe.
,, 1399. *Henry IV.*
,, 1403. Battle of Shrewsbury.
,, 1413. *Henry V.*
,, 1415. Battle of Agincourt.
,, 1420. Treaty of Troyes.
,, 1422. *Henry VI.*
,, 1429. Joan of Arc raises the siege of Orleans.
,, 1453. Last campaign of the Hundred Years' War.
,, 1455. The Wars of the Roses begin.
,, 1461. *Edward IV.*
,, 1471. Battle of Tewkesbury.
,, 1483. *Edward V. Richard III.*
,, 1485. Battle of Bosworth.

BOOK III

THE TUDOR PERIOD

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A THOUGHTFUL Englishman who looked back over the history of his country in 1485 might easily have concluded that the days of its greatness were past and gone, like those of the Roman Empire. He would note (i) that its splendid line of kings, the Plantagenets, had split into two branches which made suicidal war upon one another, and that one of these branches had ended in a lunatic and the other in a criminal; (ii) that its great barons, who had produced Magna Carta and helped the kings to conquer France, had forsaken both the cause of law and order at home and the quest of glory abroad, had turned their weapons of destruction upon one another, and were now well-nigh extinct; (iii) that the remarkable institution of parliament, whereby king, barons, knights and burgesses had co-operated in the government of the country, had entirely discredited itself, and was now seldom summoned; (iv) that the English empire in France had been lost, all but a single town; (v) that the Church, once the leader of the people in so many great causes, the Church of Lanfranc, Becket, Langton and Grosseteste, was now inefficient and despised, quite out of touch with the life of the nation.

The Past and the Future

Thus he might have read the past; but he could not read the future. If, however, he had been granted such a vision, what would it have shown him? He would have seen (i) that with the new Tudor dynasty monarchy would revive and produce, in Henry VIII and Elizabeth, monarchs more powerful and more popular than any that went before them; (ii) that in place of the old feudal baronage would arise a

new aristocracy, not without grave faults, but on the whole more magnificent, more intelligent, and less exclusive in its social outlook than the baronage of the Middle Ages; (iii) that parliament would be revived, and would do its work much better than before, because the classes which supplied the members of the House of Commons would be better educated than their mediaeval ancestors; (iv) that in place of the old lost empire in France would arise a far grander empire in America and in India; (v) that out of a religious revolution there would emerge new forms of religious life, a national Church of England under state control, and a variety of "free Churches" or nonconformist sects, maintaining the sacred right of the individual to worship God in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience.

It is in the sixteenth century, the Tudor Period, that the foundations of all these new developments are laid. It is an age of great achievements and of great Englishmen. But there has perhaps been no period in which English history was more dependent upon developments on the Continent. For example, we spoke above of improved education. But improved education was but one aspect of the Renaissance, and the Renaissance came from Italy. Again, we spoke of the religious revolution; but the leader of that revolution was Luther, a German; and the Scottish reformers and English Puritans were, in the main, disciples of Calvin, a Frenchman. Finally, though it was the English who ultimately won the race for empire in North America and India, it was a Genoese navigator in the service of Spain who discovered the New World, and a Portuguese who rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Other men laboured, and the English entered into their labours.

England's debt to Europe

This book will therefore begin with a chapter which attempts to set forth the European background of the Tudor period.

When we come to the Tudor period itself, it will be convenient to divide it into three periods of more or less equal length. The first may be called *Before the Reformation*, and

covers the reign of Henry VII and the first half of the reign of Henry VIII; it ends with the quarrel of king and pope over the divorce of Catherine of Aragon, the downfall of the last great English cardinal and the summoning of what was to prove the first great modern (as distinct from mediaeval) English Parliament, in 1529. The second period may be called *The Reformation Period:* it begins with Henry VIII's quarrel with Rome, continues through the Protestant experiments of Edward VI, and the Catholic restoration of Mary to the religious settlement of Elizabeth in 1559. This same year saw also the triumph of a very different sort of religious Reformation in Scotland. The third period might be called *After the Reformation*, but it is perhaps more convenient to call it *The Reign of Elizabeth.* Each of these three periods will form the subject of a chapter, and a final chapter will contain some account of the literature and art of England in what was not only the Age of Elizabeth but also the Age of Shakespeare.

It will be convenient if those who do not know them will learn by heart—

Henry VII	1485–1509
Henry VIII . . .	1509–1547
Edward VI . . .	1547–1553
Mary	1553–1558
Elizabeth	1558–1603

CHAPTER II

THE NEW EUROPE

(i) *The Renaissance* [1]

"Other-worldliness"

In order to understand the meaning of the Renaissance we must cast a glance far back to earlier centuries. When the orderly civilisation of the Ancient World was broken down in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., the Christian Church remained intact, an impressive survival amidst the wreckage. The result was that the Church obtained, and retained for a thousand years, an extraordinarily powerful position. How it dominated politics and gave orders to kings we have seen. Not less was its ascendancy in the mind of man. It impressed upon the world in general its philosophy, its view of life; and that view of life was, to use a convenient term, "other-worldly." The greatest poem of the Middle Ages, the most splendid and complete expression of the mediaeval mind, was *The Divine Comedy* of Dante (about A.D. 1300), and its subject is a complete survey of that Other World, the World of the Dead, in its three divisions, Hell, Purgatory and Paradise. In the mediaeval view of life, as learnt from the Church, this world we live in was of but small account—a place of painful probation, a prison through whose bars the soul looked out towards Heaven: the joys of life were to be despised, or rather dreaded as snares of the devil. It is not, of course, to be supposed that most people in the Dark and Middle Ages really felt like that; the point is that in their more

[1] This, the French form of the word, is in common use. Some modern writers prefer "Renascence." Some again use both terms, limiting "Renaissance" to art and scholarship, and employing "Renascence" in a wider sense, a practice which seems likely to cause confusion; if two different terms are required for different things, they should not be different spellings of the same word.

serious moments they felt that they ought so to feel. This view of life is not the Christianity of the Gospels, nor is it the Christianity of to-day, but it was the Christianity of the mediaeval Church, and it still finds expression in some of our hymns. For example—

> "Weary of earth and laden with my sin
> I look to heaven and long to enter in."

Those words were once the sincere expression of what we all, I suppose, to-day regard as an unhealthy state of mind.

It was not in the nature of things that such a view of life should maintain its hold for ever. The marvel is, to us, that it retained its hold so long. Its breakdown was gradual, and may be traced far back, but it came with a rush in the fifteenth century, and to that breakdown of the "other-worldly" view of life we give the name of Renaissance.

The Renaissance may be defined as a re-assertion of "worldliness," not in the vulgar sense, but in the best sense that the word can bear; an appreciation of this world as a place of boundless glorious possibilities, and of Man as capable of realising these possibilities in himself. This new outlook can be read between the lines of Chaucer, even though his characters are pilgrims to a mediaeval shrine. It finds its fullest poetic expression in Shakespeare. "What a piece of work is a man!" says Hamlet; "how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!"

The Renaissance

Some writers of history are never happy until they have found a date for everything, and it is sometimes stated that the Renaissance was "caused" by the sack of Constantinople, the one surviving remnant of the old Graeco-Roman Empire,[1] by the Turks in 1453. The triumph of the Turks

[1] The successors of the great lawgiver Justinian continued to rule over a diminishing empire for over nine hundred years, losing province after province to Turks, Serbs and Bulgars. At last only the city of Constantinople was left. "Rome" begins and ends as a city state.

drove the learned Greeks to seek new homes in Italy, and they brought their precious manuscripts with them. But the enthusiasm for the pagan classics was already in full flood at that date, and began a hundred years before it. Again, the study of pagan classics, whether from Constantinople or elsewhere, did not "cause" the Renaissance. It would be more true to say that the Renaissance caused the revival of interest in the old Greek texts. The chief centres of the Renaissance were the independent city-republics of northern Italy, such as Florence and Venice. These cities delighted in the memorials of ancient Athens, because ancient Athens had been all that they themselves aspired to be.

In Italy the spirit of the Renaissance expressed itself most vividly through the art of the great Italian painters, and a study of a small selection of their pictures in chronological order would give a fair idea of what the Renaissance meant. This great series of painters took its rise far back in the Middle Ages. The first great master, Giotto, was a contemporary of Dante. The Church was far the greatest patron of the arts, and the early pictures were religious both in their choice of subject and in the spirit in which they were painted. Fra Angelico (1387–1455) "was the painter *par excellence* of Christianity as preached by St. Francis of Assisi. The joys of belief, the happiness of suffering for the faith, the beatitude of the elect, have never been more eloquently expressed." [1] He paints in the spirit of the cloister. But his younger contemporary, Fra Filippo Lippi (1406–1469), was "a monk who had not altogether broken with the world," and Botticelli (1444–1510), even in his religious subjects, paints in a vein of romantic sentiment far removed from the piety of Fra Angelico; and not less famous and successful than his Madonnas are his purely pagan pictures, *The Birth of Venus* and *Spring*. Henceforth "pagan" subjects predominate more and more, and even when the subject is

The development of painting

[1] From S. Reinach's *Apollo;* as are also the later quotations in this paragraph.

religious, the spirit of the painting is that of the new "worldliness." The Madonna and Child is a glorification of human motherhood, and the nominally Biblical figures of Michelangelo are really magnificent illustrations of Shakespeare's text, "What a piece of work is a man!" The later painters of Venice devoted themselves more especially to celebrating the pomps and splendours of this world, and their "Madonnas and Saints were no longer ascetic and morose persons, but beautiful young women and handsome young men, who loved to deck themselves with gorgeous stuffs, and held life to be well worth living."

The transformation of the Papacy

It is hardly surprising that the painters depicted religious subjects in this irreligious manner, for the leaders of the Church itself had been captured by the Renaissance. Though unity had been restored to the Papacy by the Council of Constance (1415), it was impossible that the popes should shoulder again the immense burdens that had proved too heavy for Hildebrand and Innocent III. They devoted themselves to Italian politics and Italian fashions, and most of all to the new Renaissance fashions in art, architecture and scholarship. They became the greatest of art patrons. The famous Sistine chapel takes its name from Sixtus IV (1471–1484); his successors employed Raphael and Michelangelo to decorate it: Leo X (1513–1522) was engaged in building the new St. Peter's, when his agent for collecting money by the sale of indulgences ran up against Martin Luther. The Renaissance in Italy, in fact, had no quarrel with religion; it simply turned its back on it, and the official leaders of the Church forsook religion and became disciples of the Renaissance.

Renaissance religion

But when the movement spread north of the Alps it took new forms, and a group of thinkers and writers began to appear, who, while full of the new spirit, turned rather to criticism than to creation, to thought rather than to art. One of these was our English Sir Thomas More, whose *Utopia* (1515) is a picture of an ideal society conceived after the Renaissance pattern. Another was Dean

Colet, the founder of St. Paul's School, and one of the first men to study St. Paul's epistles not as a mere collection of texts for theological argumentation, but as the letters of an historical character, throwing light on the historic origins of Christianity. More influential, however, than either of these was their friend and frequent visitor, Erasmus of Rotterdam.

Erasmus was a brilliant scholar, a wit, and a man of great personal charm with friends all over Western Europe. He was a man of the Renaissance, and at the same time deeply interested in religion. It seemed to him that Christianity should mean, above all things, something practical —love, humility and purity. But the Church had more and more buried these Christian virtues under a mass of doctrines and ceremonies. Erasmus did not quarrel with this or that doctrine, and assert another in its place: he simply objected to the enormous importance attached to such things: it struck him as unintelligent. In his popular satire, *The Praise of Folly*, written in England in 1509, he displayed the absurdity of much that passed for religion in the mediaeval Church. Folly, he says, is the chief source of unhappiness, and rules the world, and more particularly the Church. Folly claims credit for spreading belief in the miraculous power of images of saints, belief that by purchasing indulgences you will be excused periods of torment in Purgatory, that the daily repetition of the Psalter will get you into Heaven, that ignorance and dirt are aids to piety. On the constructive side, he sought to recall men's minds to pure and primitive Christianity by publishing editions of the early Christian fathers and an edition of the New Testament in the original Greek, with notes explaining the misleading interpretations that the Church had often placed upon the official Latin rendering of Christ's words.

Such was the spirit of the Renaissance as applied to religion. It was anything but revolutionary. Erasmus dedicated his Greek Testament to the Pope, not in a spirit of cowardly flattery, but because he believed that the first need of the Church was to convert its official leaders.

Erasmus, according to an old saying, "laid the egg, and Luther hatched it." There is some truth in this. But Erasmus entirely disapproved of Luther's revolutionary methods; he was one of those who think it better to

> "bear those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of."

(ii) *The New Monarchies*

Limitations of mediaeval monarchy

The civilised lands round the Mediterranean had once been united under the Roman Empire, and in theory that Empire had never come to an end. For some centuries after the abdication of the last emperor reigning in Italy (A.D. 476) the barbarian kings of the West had admitted a vague allegiance to the "Roman" Emperors ruling in Constantinople. In A.D. 800 Charlemagne had revived the Roman Empire in the West, and his title and claims had been taken up, since A.D. 962, by the kings of Germany. English kings since the conquest had never admitted the claims of these German "Holy Roman Emperors," but even they acknowledged the superior authority, in certain spheres, of the emperor's spiritual partner and rival, the Pope. Thus, throughout the Middle Ages no king claimed absolute sovereignty, no nation absolute independence. In fact, what we call national distinctions counted for much less than divisions of class. Men thought of themselves as churchmen, nobles, or serfs, rather than as Englishmen, Frenchmen, or Germans. A shadowy "Federation of Christendom" survived, the ghost of the Old Roman Empire of the Caesars.

Again, while the authority of kings was limited in one direction by that of their nominal superiors, the popes and emperors, it was limited in another by the greatest of their subjects, the feudal baronage. Magna Carta had defined the liberties of barons against their king, and these liberties had been asserted against even so powerful a sovereign as Edward I. Yet the English kings were the strongest monarchs

of the Middle Ages. The kings of France numbered among their nominal subjects feudal rulers of vast provinces who continually defied them and made war on them, Dukes of Burgundy, Counts of Brittany and Dukes of Normandy or Gascony, who were also kings of England.

Trade and gunpowder

The second half of the fifteenth century, the Age of the Renaissance, was marked in the political sphere by the development of stronger and more centralised monarchies than had been seen in Europe since the days of the greatest Roman Emperors. The chief causes of this development were the growth of towns and the middle classes, and the introduction of gunpowder. The middle classes of the towns lived by trade, and supported the kings against their baronage because centralisation and unity meant law and order. Gunpowder gave kings a military resource against which feudal castles and feudal armour were no longer a secure defence. Thus the way was prepared for the levelling of all classes beneath the despotism of kings.

France

Joan of Arc had kindled a new spirit of patriotism in France, and this spirit found its leader, as she had intended, in her king, Charles VII, who grew wiser and braver as he grew older. Charles VII built up a strong army, secured a sound revenue, and struck a bargain with the Papacy which gave him complete control of the French Church. His work was carried on by his son, Louis XI, 1461–1483, whose reign exactly coincides with that of our Edward IV. Louis XI was a queer and unpleasant person, cruel and grossly superstitious. His tastes were those of the middle-class merchant of his day, and he preferred even the dress of a shopkeeper to that of a king. He despised both all that was good and all that was bad in the life and habits of the feudal aristocracy, both its chivalry and sportsmanship and also its reckless violence. His arts were craft and intrigue: he preferred diplomacy to war, and he may be accounted one of the greatest as well as one of the most treacherous masters of that art. His great enemy, Charles the Bold of Burgundy, nicknamed him "the universal

spider," and certainly Louis proved to be the spider and Charles the fly.

The power of the Dukes of Burgundy was a recent development. They were descendants of John, the French king captured at Poitiers. John had made his younger son Duke of Burgundy, a province of Eastern France, and a long succession of lucky marriages and conquests had united under successive dukes large territories stretching, roughly, in a broad strip from the Lake of Geneva to the English Channel and the Zuider Zee, including all the rich lands we now call Holland, Belgium and French Flanders.[1] As the dukes grew more powerful, they grew more independent. They allied themselves with Henry V, and it was the support of Burgundy as much as his own prowess that enabled the English king to conquer half France. Similarly, the fate of the English was sealed when Burgundy made peace with France four years after the death of Joan of Arc.

Charles of Burgundy was the greatest, but by no means the only one, of the great feudatories whom Louis XI set himself to destroy. It was characteristic of Louis's methods that the decisive blow was dealt, not by Louis at the head of his own army after the fashion of mediaeval warrior kings, but by the allies he had stirred up to do his work for him—the Swiss and the Lorrainers, by whom Charles was defeated and killed at Nancy in 1477. There followed a scramble for his territories and his heiress, for he left no son. Here Louis came off badly: he secured much less than France was entitled to, and not only Holland and Belgium, but most of what is now French Flanders passed, with the heiress Mary, to Maximilian of Austria. None the less, Louis XI reduced the power of the great nobles, and left France united, except for Calais and the outlying province of Brittany (which was absorbed by marriage soon afterwards).

[1] There is a sort of parallel between the history of the Dukes of Burgundy in France, and of the Dukes of Lancaster (see p. 113) in England. The difference is that, England being an island, the Dukes of Lancaster remained wholly English, whereas the territories and ambitions of the Dukes of Burgundy extended beyond the frontiers of France.

Spain

At the time of the Norman Conquest, Christian Spain was just beginning its long struggle for the overthrow of the Moorish power which had been established almost all over the country. By 1250 the Moors were confined to the province of Granada, in the extreme south, but the Christians were divided into a number of small kingdoms, of which the chief were Portugal, Castile in the centre and north, and Aragon on the Mediterranean. In 1479, two years after the battle of Nancy, Castile and Aragon were united by the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon with Isabella of Castile. This was the birth of modern Spain. In 1492 Granada was captured, and the Moorish province annexed.

Austria.

In the early Middle Ages the German kings, or emperors, had been the greatest sovereigns in Europe; but just because they were so powerful and claimed, as emperors, to control the popes, they were the chief enemies and victims of the Papacy. Also, and for the same reason, they exhausted themselves in efforts to conquer Italy, just as English kings, at a later date, exhausted themselves in efforts to conquer France. The struggle of Papacy and empire culminated in the downfall of the House of Hohenstaufen (see p. 80), and the ruin of the old German monarchy, in 1250. Henceforth German kings were mere shadows, and the great feudal princes became independent in all but name, the chief of these being the seven "electors," who were empowered to elect the successive king-emperors: these were the princes of Brandenburg, Saxony, Bohemia, the Palatinate, and the Archbishops of Mainz (Mayence), Köln (Cologne), and Trier (Trèves). However, the emperors, though no longer rulers of Germany except in a nominal sense, succeeded in the fifteenth century in gathering together, by force, luck and cunning, the group of south-eastern territories which came to be spoken of as "Austria." These included Austria in the narrower sense (which is roughly also the post-war sense), Bohemia, Silesia and Hungary. This group of territories was ruled from 1486 to 1519 by the brilliant though erratic

Hapsburg emperor, Maximilian, who had added the Netherlands to his other territories by his marriage with Mary of Burgundy.

Then followed a much more sensational marriage which reduced these three powers to two. Ferdinand and Isabella had no sons. Their younger daughter married Henry VIII of England, but the elder, the inheritress of Spain, and the vast American territories that now went with it, married Philip the Handsome, son of Maximilian. By 1519 the son of this marriage, Charles V, was ruler of all the dominions of both Spain and Austria. Such was the result of a series of international marriages. The growth of the power of kings had led to an increase of activity in what we call "foreign policy." Kings, being more powerful at home, interested themselves more in their neighbours: hence alliances, cemented by royal marriages. A singular crop of sonless families brought it about that these marriages involved not only alliances, but unions. Thus Castile was united to Aragon, and first the Netherlands and then the Castile–Aragon combination were united with Austria.

Union of Spain and Austria

A fine field for the exploitation of foreign ambitions had been already discovered by the three "great powers" in Italy. Italy was not united, but was divided between five "little powers"—Venice, Milan, Florence, the Papacy and Naples. Milan, attacked by Florence and Naples, invited the assistance of Charles VIII of France, the successor of Louis XI; and Charles VIII, furbishing up an old claim of the Valois line to the kingdom of Naples, invaded Italy in 1494, in much the same reckless spirit as Henry V had invaded France eighty years before. It was, as French historians call it, a "policy of magnificence," and entailed a series of wars which lasted off and on for sixty-five years, 1494–1559. These wars cover the reigns of the first four of our Tudors; of four French kings, Charles VIII, Louis XII, Francis I and Henry II; of Ferdinand and Isabella, of Maximilian, and their joint heir Charles V. All three "great powers" joined in, and the five

The Italian Wars

Dominions of the
HOUSE OF HAPSBURG
1559
English Miles
0 100 200 400 600
POLAND
TURKISH EMPIRE
ENGLAND
FRANCE
PORTUGAL
SPAIN
Thorn
Warsaw
Lublin
Lemberg
Mohacs
Adrianople
Danube
Oder
Prague
Vienna
Drave
Sove
Hamburg
BRANDENBURG
Elbe
SAXONY
Dresden
BAVARIA
Munich
Weser
Cologne
Rhine
Luxembourg
Metz
Berne
Milan
Pavia
Genoa
Parma
Florence
Rome
Naples
Marseilles
Rhone
Amsterdam
Antwerp
Paris
Rouen
Orleans
Seine
Loire
Nantes
Lyons
Bordeaux
Garonne
Calais
London
Thames
Barcelona
Bayonne
Ebro
Madrid
Tagus
Guadalquivir
Seville
Granada
Cadiz
Tangier
Lisbon

EXPLANATION OF FIGURES IN THE MAP.

1. Spain, united by marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, whose heiress marries Philip of Hapsburg, father of Charles V.

2. Flanders, Brabant, Luxemburg, etc. (roughly Holland and Belgium), territory of Dukes of Burgundy, whose heiress marries Maximilian of Hapsburg, grandfather of Charles V.

3. Franche Comté, the "Free County" of Burgundy, inherited with 2.

4, 5, 6. Milan, Sardinia, Naples, Sicily, by conquest in the Italian wars.

(1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, all pass from Charles V to his son Philip II of Spain.)

7. This contains: (i) Austria, Tyrol, etc., the inheritance of the Hapsburg house, and (ii) Bohemia and a strip of Hungary, over which Ferdinand, brother of Charles V, is elected king after the defeat and death of Louis, king of Bohemia and Hungary, by the Turks at Mohacz, 1526. All 7 passes to Ferdinand and succeeding "Austrian" (as distinct from "Spanish") Hapsburgs.

BRANCH

"little powers" allied now with this invader and now with that. Our English Wolsey tried, not very successfully, to take a share in the game. Campaigns in Italy often involved campaigns in the Netherlands and on the Franco-German border; in fact, the campaign in which England (as ally of Spain) lost Calais was one of the last incidents in this cycle of wars.

To cut a long story short—and it would be a very long story—by the end of these wars, in 1559, France had gained nothing in Italy, but, fighting on the German frontier, she secured the three bishoprics of Metz, Toul and Verdun in Lorraine, and thus strengthened her eastern frontier. The Spain–Austria combination of Charles V acquired both Milan and the kingdom of Naples and Sicily; and as Spain and Austria had just been separated on the abdication of Charles V, these passed to his son, Philip II of Spain. Italy was to be dominated by foreigners until the days of Cavour and Garibaldi.

During the course of these wars, a Florentine scholar and politician, Machiavelli, had in 1513 published a little book called *The Prince*, which set forth the political ideas of the new age, the "new worldliness" of the Renaissance in its political aspect. In Machiavelli's philosophy the ideal of a united Christendom, dominated by pope and emperor, is dismissed as an idle and pernicious illusion. But he goes further than this, and attacks the claim of Christianity to influence politics. By glorifying humility, he says, and pointing to a future life, it has simply made man weak. The law of international politics is unlimited competition: each state for itself, and the devil take the hindmost. The prince must above all things be strong. The secret of strength is popularity, but it does not matter how he gains his popularity, provided he gains it. Law is better than force, but if law will not serve, the prince must use force. He must "know when to do good and when to do evil": he must prefer fear to love, and "play the beast, both lion and fox as well as man." No wonder Bacon said that "Machiavelli wrote what men do, not what they ought

Machiavelli

to do." Almost all Tudor statesmen were his disciples, and many since—Napoleon and Bismarck among the greatest. The civilised world is only now at length, after the terrific exhibition of Machiavellianism which caused the Great War, beginning with difficulty to realise that the philosophy of Machiavelli may involve, under modern conditions, the suicide of civilisation.

(iii) *The New Worlds*

The Crusades, it has sometimes been said, had religious causes, but secular results. Certain it is that, from about 1250 onwards, there began a remarkable development in the relations between Europe and Asia. East and west It is, of course, history and not geography which has decided that "Eurasia," the greatest land-mass in the world, should form two continents and not one. Round about 1250 the artificial barriers set by race and religion seemed to be suddenly breaking down. In 1259, for example, Kublai Khan, the great Mongolian emperor of China, sent a mission to the Pope asking him to send a hundred men of learning and ability to establish a good understanding between East and West in Pekin. The official hundred were not sent, but various merchants and friars travelled at large in Asia. Marco Polo spent sixteen years at the court of Kublai Khan, and came back with amazing tales of the civilisation and wealth of the unknown East; and in the next century, as if to prove his assertions, there came from the East the mariner's compass, the use of gunpowder for warfare and improved methods of book production which led up to the invention of printing.

Then, from about 1350 onwards, this intercourse of East and West was made more and more difficult by the growth of a barbarous military and naval power blocking the routes, namely the Ottoman Turks, who captured Constantinople in 1453, but were all over Asia Minor and the Balkan Peninsula a century before that date. If communication was to be re-established with the fascinating El Dorado of

Marco Polo, it must be by routes which would circumvent the Turk—by sea routes, in fact. This was the problem which fascinated a certain prince of the royal house of Portugal, known as Henry the Navigator.

Henry the Navigator

Henry the Navigator was a first cousin of our English Henry V, his mother being a daughter of John of Gaunt who had married the king of Portugal. To English readers he is less well known than his cousin, but surely he is far more important. Henry V is a typical example of the man who makes a great noise in the world by trying to do something that is still popular, but already stupid and out of date. Henry the Navigator, on the other hand, had his eye fixed on the future. For forty-two years (1418–1460) he devoted himself to the study of oceanic navigation. Hitherto ships had relied mainly upon oarsmen, and an oared ship cannot be a seaworthy sailing-ship, because its side is pierced for the oars. Again, the oared ship, requiring a large crew, could not carry enough food to survive many days away from port. Henry the Navigator and his disciples devised the new kind of sailing-ship which made possible the voyages of the great explorers. His aim, we are told, was to lay hands upon the wealthy lands of the "Gold Coast" and take the Moors in the rear. It was not till a generation after his death that the further consequences of his work began to be apparent. In 1484 his pupils reached the Congo: in 1486 Diaz was carried by a storm round the Cape of Good Hope: in 1497 Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape and landed at Calicut in India. Ten years later Portuguese viceroys, Almeida and Albuquerque, were building up a sea power that dominated the whole Indian Ocean, and drew wealth from every port from Mombasa to Canton.

America.

Meanwhile, half-way in date between the voyages of Diaz and of Da Gama, a Genoese sailor, rightly conceiving the world to be a sphere, concluded that "the Indies" could be reached by a direct voyage across the Atlantic. This was, of course, Columbus. Rejected by the Portuguese king, he placed his services at the disposal of

Spain, and in 1492, with one decked ship of 100 tons and two open boats, after a voyage of seventy days, found land in what came to be called the West Indies. He died without knowing that what he had found was not a new route to an Old World, but a New World the very existence of which had hitherto been unsuspected. That such, in fact, it was dawned upon the mind of another Spanish adventurer, Balboa,[1] when

> "He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
> Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
> Silent, upon a peak in Darien."

That was in 1513. In 1519 Cortez with about 700 men landed on the coast of Mexico, and within a year was master of the Mexican Empire of Montezuma. In 1531 Pizarro surpassed his performances by conquering Peru with only 183 companions.

Spain and Portugal were as yet alone in the field, and as there seemed more than enough for both, they agreed to a division of the spoil. In 1493 this agreement was enshrined in a Papal Bull of Alexander VI, himself a Spaniard. When, in 1520 Magellan's expedition rounded the American continent, and, returning by the Cape of Good Hope, proved that the world was a sphere, the line was revised and extended right round the earth along a single line of longitude. Portugal was to have Brazil (which her mariners had discovered in 1500) and all that lay east of it, including the whole Indian Ocean, as far as undiscovered Australia. From this point in the antipodes began the sphere of Spain, which included the Philippines, visited by Magellan on his great voyage, and all the Pacific islands and the whole American continent with the West Indies, except Brazil.

The Papal award

In the very year in which Balboa "stared at the Pacific," a Polish scholar had worked out an even more revolutionary discovery. In 1513 Copernicus announced his theory that the earth was not the centre of the universe, but a planet revolving round the sun, and in 1540,

The new astronomy.

[1] Keats, in the sonnet quoted, mistakenly calls him Cortez.

after long delays, he published his great treatise on the subject, with a dedication to the Pope. Henceforth there followed, with the aid of continually improving astronomical instruments, the series of discoveries which revealed the earth to be an insignificant speck of matter in the vastness of stellar space, a minor satellite of a minor star.

It is interesting to compare the effect upon the world of these two sets of discoveries. The discoveries of the navigators revolutionised commerce and politics, and most of all the commerce and politics of our own country. The Atlantic superseded the Mediterranean as the great highway of civilisation, and Venice and Genoa saw themselves surpassed as commercial centres by Antwerp, Amsterdam, and London. The discoveries of the astronomers, on the other hand, had no such practical results, for though one might discover new worlds in space, it was as impossible as ever to visit them. But in the long run the influence of the astronomical discoveries upon the human mind may be accounted more profound than that of the achievements of the great navigators. The navigators seemed at first to make the world immeasurably larger, but now that the era of exploration is over, we realise its limits, and feel, so to speak, at home within them. But we have hardly yet, perhaps, grasped all that is implied by the ascertained facts of modern astronomy. Mediaeval maps placed Jerusalem in the centre of the world. Heaven was supposed to be located immediately above it and Hell immediately below it. Such was the simple scheme of Dante's great poem, a scheme almost as simple and primitive as that of Homer, who located his gods on Mount Olympus. Copernican astronomy swept all that away. It became necessary to think of God, of Heaven, and of Hell, as things infinitely more remote. It was a very natural instinct which led the Papacy to condemn the work of Copernicus, and to threaten his successor Galileo with the penalties of the inquisition. Henceforth religion would be, for men of intellect and imagination, something more difficult, because more wholly spiritual, than had been the faith of the Middle Ages.

(iv) *Reformation and Counter-Reformation*

The Church exists for the sake of religion; when it ceases to serve the purposes of religion, it is heading straight for disaster. We have already, both in this Book and in the previous one, noticed how the Church had been turned aside from its true purpose. The first false turning, perhaps, lay far back in the thirteenth century (reign of Henry III), when, in its warfare with the Empire, the Papacy mercilessly exploited its spiritual resources to raise money for the struggle. Then followed the Captivity and the Schism; and each stage in the fall of the Papacy was paralleled by a stage in the fall of the higher clergy throughout Western Christendom. Then came the Renaissance, which weakened the authority of the Church over the minds of the intelligent; and the leaders of the Church at the same time weakened their authority with the simple pious by so obviously preferring the new learning to the old faith. Erasmus and his followers had sought to use the new learning in the best interests of the Church, but they had achieved little. Such was the position when the crash came.

The Lutheran revolution

Martin Luther (1483–1546) was by birth the child of simple pious Germans; by education a good scholar and something of a musician; by nature a man of "religious genius." By this we mean that he felt that intense craving for salvation, for communion with God, which is as definitely a special gift as a gift for music or mathematics. He went into a monastery, seeking God according to the prescribed mediaeval method. He fasted, he scourged himself, but God he could not find. Then he had a sudden revelation: "the just," he read in St. Paul's words, "shall live by faith";—not by penances prescribed by priests. The true Christian man is the man with a Christian heart; all else is nothing or worse than nothing. This was in 1507. Ten years later (1517), when Luther was quietly working as a theological lecturer in the university of Wittenberg, in Saxony, he was provoked to action.

Tetzel, the seller of papal Indulgences, *i.e.* remittances of penalties beyond the grave (for so their purchasers understood them), came to Wittenberg, and Luther challenged him to argument. The spark kindled a conflagration. Why? Because Luther spoke out the unspoken thought of thousands. Moreover he was a bold and skilful controversialist, a master of popular pamphleteering, a great religious demagogue, addressing the masses in language that went straight to their hearts. Erasmus wrote in Latin, but Luther wrote in German. In 1520 the Pope excommunicated him: Luther publicly burnt the bull of excommunication. In 1521 the young emperor, Charles V, summoned him to attend the German Diet or Parliament at Worms.

The Diet of Worms is one of the great dramatic moments of history. Two powers confronted one another: on the one side the Roman Emperor surrounded by the princes of Germany, all dressed in the appropriate official costumes, representing the pomp and power of monarchy and aristocracy; on the other a man who had been a friar and was now not even that. But the ex-friar was the greater power of the two, for he represented the demands of freedom of conscience and freedom of intellect. Luther was asked to recant. He replied, "Unless I am convinced by witness of Scripture, I neither can nor will revoke anything, since to act against conscience is neither safe nor upright. God help me. Amen." He was allowed to depart under the safe-conduct promised him, but the Diet condemned his teaching. By this date, only four years after the contest with Tetzel, half Germany was "Lutheran," *i.e.* in open protest against the authority of the Church.

What was to happen next? That was just what Luther did not know. He was a mighty rebel, but he had no gifts for rebuilding where he had destroyed. Meanwhile the new religious movement had drawn to itself powerful patrons who were not at all religious, patrons who stood to Luther much as John of Gaunt had stood to Wycliffe. If monasteries and the like were a hindrance rather than a help to true religion, let them be swept away, and let *us*, said the

German princes, take their lands and wealth. Thus the so-called Reformation took on a political as well as a religious character; and on the political side, it was a wholesale pillage of the Church. Luther accepted these dubious allies much too readily. The new Lutheran churches became state churches; they exchanged the authority of the Pope for the authority of the local German prince.

Then ensued a long struggle (say 1521–1555) between Protestant and Catholic factions in Germany; but it was mainly a political struggle and the question at issue was —would the great emperor Charles V, ruler of Spain and the Indies and most of Italy, succeed in restoring the authority of kingship in Germany? He failed, and his failure meant the survival of the practical independence of the Lutheran princes. The Treaty of Augsburg, 1555, established in Germany the principal of *cuius regio, eius religio*. Each prince chooses his religion, Lutheran or Catholic, and is entitled to force his subjects to agree with him.

Whether the new Lutheran form of Christianity was better than the old Catholic was and is a question of opinion: what was not opinion, but fact, was that the Church had been split into two hostile factions.

Meanwhile Luther's movement had stirred the Roman, or Catholic, Church to set about in earnest what it had vaguely talked of for a century, namely a reform of its own practices. This movement is generally called the Counter-Reformation. There were a few noble-minded men who hoped, by means of this reform from within, to reconcile the Lutherans who had rebelled against an unreformed Church, and to restore unity to Western Christendom. But the spirit of hatred and vengeance triumphed, and the Counter-Reformation became a movement for the destruction of "the heretics" by war and persecution. Herein it failed; but it was far more successful in obliterating, at any rate for a time, the spirit of the Renaissance. The "reassertion of worldliness" was smothered beneath the strife of creeds. The popes who collected classical manuscripts and patronised painters and

The Counter-Reformation

architects were succeeded by popes who revived the spirit of the Crusades, against not the Moslem, but the Protestant.

Just as the Lutheran movement took its rise in Germany, traditionally anti-papal ever since the strife of popes and emperors, so the Counter-Reformation took its rise in Spain, where, perhaps owing to the presence of the Moslem within the country, the Church had remained more vigorous than elsewhere in Europe. The leading spirit of the Counter-Reformation was the Spanish soldier, Ignatius Loyola, who, in 1540, founded the Company of Jesus—the Jesuits.

The Jesuits were unlike any order of monks or friars that had existed hitherto. They had no special dress, no special homes, no special religious duties. Their work was to be done in the world at large, and nothing was to impede their freedom of movement within it. The leading features of the Order were elaborate training for the work, and implicit obedience to the heads of the Order. The best work of the Jesuits was done in the sphere of education, and they quickly became the best schoolmasters in Europe. Men sent their sons to the Jesuit schools because they were the best schools, and their sons came home enthusiasts for the Counter-Reformation. In Germany their university of Ingolstadt quickly rivalled the fame of Luther's Wittenberg; and in Flanders their college of Douai trained Englishmen in Elizabeth's reign to go forth and conquer the great island stronghold of Protestantism. And as they served the young as schoolmasters, so they served their parents as confessors. The old mercenary system for compounding for sins by trivial penances had been discredited along with the sale of indulgences. But the craving for confession and absolution remained, and the Jesuits developed the art of satisfying this craving by more subtle methods. Often, no doubt, the Jesuit confessor was an admirable spiritual guide; often also, however, he showed himself an adept in the art of "explaining away" the sins of his clients by inventing comfortable hypocrisies. They were accused of teaching the dangerous doctrine that "the end justifies the means,"

The Jesuits

and certain Jesuits, on various occasions, encouraged the assassination of Protestant sovereigns; for they held that the Church was at war with heresy, and that all is fair in war.

When the Counter-Reformation was in full swing, the Pope summoned a General Council of the Church at Trent, on the frontiers of Italy and Austria, which held sessions off and on from 1545 to 1563. Nearly a century and a half had passed since the Council of Constance (see p. 123). That had been a Council of the whole Catholic Church which, after ending the schism, had shrunk from the enormous task of reforming the Church "in head and members." The Council of Trent represented scarcely more than half the Church that met at Constance, and its task was far simpler. It reasserted and defined Catholic doctrine, and condemned all the "errors" of the Protestants in terms that ruled out any possibility of compromise.

While the Roman Church was thus arming itself for the struggle and drawing fresh energy from Spain, Protestantism was doing much the same thing in a different way, and drawing fresh energy from the inspiring example set by the city of Geneva, where John Calvin,[1] the son of a French lawyer, began his remarkable work in 1536, four years before the foundation of the Jesuits.

Calvinism

Luther had laid down the fundamental idea of Protestantism,—that each individual, be he priest or layman, is in direct contact with God, and needs no hierarchy of priests as intermediary; that Christendom is, in fact, a spiritual democracy, not an aristocracy with priests as its rulers. The weakness of Lutheranism was that it failed to provide a new church organisation through which this idea could express itself. Calvin had the advantage of starting with a compact city state, which he organised as a self-governing church-and-state, ruled by a Consistory, consisting of twelve pastors, and twelve representatives of the elected Town Council. This is the famous *presbyterian* system, in which

[1] Note these dates of birth: Erasmus 1467, Luther 1483, Loyola 1493, Calvin 1509. The movements each name represents follow rapidly upon one another, the last two being, however, more exactly contemporary than the dates would suggest.

elected lay elders or presbyters share with the ordained ministers the responsibility for the government of the Church. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this innovation. It is Christian democracy in action. Whereas the Counter-Reformation relied upon an organisation of experts under almost military discipline, Calvinism appealed to the layman as a fully responsible member of his religious community. Nor, in the long run, was its importance less in the sphere of secular politics. "If I were writing a history of democracy," says a distinguished historian,[1] "I should deal first with democracy in religion, which is Calvinism founded by a great Frenchman at Geneva, and then with democracy in politics, which is the French Revolution, inaugurated by another great Frenchman of Geneva, Rousseau." For we must remember that, right down to the Reform Bill of 1832, the English Parliament was not democratic, but aristocratic, in its system of representation.

It is easy to criticise the Calvinist, or Puritan, type of religion. Though democratic, it was intensely tyrannical, for the tyranny of a narrow-minded majority is the most crushing of all tyrannies. In Calvin's Geneva public worship was compulsory; gay clothes and dancing were punishable offences; inchastity was at times punished with death. But its worst enemies cannot deny that, in its great days, it was productive of splendid energy. In Scotland it transformed one of the most backward and lawless of peoples into one of the best educated and most industrious nations in the world. In England it inspired the movement which secured parliamentary authority against the Stuart kings. It nerved the Dutch to fight for their independence, and to make themselves for a time leaders of Europe in commerce and in science. And it sent the Pilgrim Fathers across the Atlantic to found the United States of America.

[1] Ernest Barker, in a footnote to Wells' *Outline of History*.

CHAPTER III

BEFORE THE REFORMATION (1485–1527)

(i) *Henry VII* (1485–1509)

HENRY VII was a self-made king: he owed his crown to his own enterprise, and he kept it by his own prudence. His connection with the old royal family was of the most flimsy description. His grandfather, Owen Tudor, had come from Wales as a young man to seek his fortune at the court of Henry V, and obtained a clerkship of the Queen's Wardrobe. After Henry V's death he won the love of his widow, Catherine of France, and was imprisoned in Newgate for his pains. After many romantic adventures he was executed after one of the minor battles of the Wars of the Roses. The son of this strange union—it is uncertain whether it was a legal marriage—Edmund Tudor, married Lady Margaret Beaufort, one of the illegitimate descendants of John of Gaunt. Their son, Henry VII, was born in 1456, so that he was twenty-nine at his accession. There were many members of the Yorkist family alive, all of whose claims, on genealogical grounds, were stronger than his own. Of these the chief were Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV, and the Earl of Warwick, son of Edward's brother, Clarence. Henry married the former, though not before Parliament had recognised that he was king in his own right, and imprisoned the latter. But the Yorkist party were not so easily discouraged. Failing genuine members of the old royal family, they rallied to the support of impostors, first Lambert Simnel and afterwards Perkin Warbeck, who personated sometimes the imprisoned Warwick and sometimes one of the two murdered sons of Edward IV who was assumed to have escaped from the Tower.

The House of Tudor

The two chief centres of Yorkist intrigue were Ireland, which always takes the opposite line to England, and Flanders, where Margaret, the sister of Edward IV and widow of the last Duke of Burgundy, was still living. Simnel was crowned in Dublin in 1487 and was brought over to England with a force of 2000 German mercenaries provided by Margaret of Burgundy, but was defeated and captured at Stoke in Lincolnshire. Henry treated his rival as a joke, and gave him a post in the royal kitchen, where he led a blameless life extending over nearly half a century. Four years later (1491) Warbeck, a Flemish youth, apprenticed to a travelling tailor, was hailed as king at Cork, invited to the French court, and transferred to Margaret of Burgundy, who constituted herself his aunt and coached him in his kingly duties. In 1495 he made an unsuccessful attempt to land at Deal, and passed to Scotland, when James IV provided him with a wife of noble family. In 1497 he landed in Cornwall, was captured after an unsuccessful attempt on Exeter, and was executed two years later.[1] The unlucky and innocent Earl of Warwick, whom he had impersonated, shared his fate. Such was the fag-end of the Wars of the Roses.

Yorkist Pretenders

Meanwhile Henry had been quietly and systematically strengthening his position. The rising power of the middle classes (see the last chapter of the previous Book) welcomed a king who gave them peace and quietness. Every year of peace made the middle classes stronger and thus strengthened the monarchy. The enemies of the first Tudor were to be found among the remnants of the old nobility who had torn one another to pieces in the Wars of the Roses. After the victory of Stoke Henry secured from parliament an Act establishing a new court of justice, called the Court of Star Chamber, consisting of certain members of the Privy Council and two judges, to deal with those who were guilty of interfering by force with the work of the ordinary courts, and to enforce the old and disused

The Star Chamber

[1] The beautiful and pathetic *Ballad of Perkin Warbeck* by Lord Alfred Douglas is well worth reading. It can be found in *Golden Numbers*, edited by Mrs. Barnett (Longmans).

statutes against the levying of private armies by means of livery and maintenance (see p. 131). In Stuart times this court was used for quite different purposes and became unpopular, but under the Tudors it was thronged with willing litigants, who wanted the king's law to protect them against their neighbour's force. The fact that it had no jury was the greatest of its merits, for juries could be overawed by the too-powerful litigant. Its favourite punishment was a crushing fine, for Henry was very well aware of the value of money.

Parliaments met from time to time, but parliamentary taxation was very unpopular, and Henry did without it as much as possible, raising funds by methods less honest, but more agreeable to the bulk of his subjects—informal extortions from rich men which went by the name of benevolences. One of his ministers, either Bishop Morton or Bishop Fox, is said to have employed an argument which logicians would call a dilemma, and ordinary people called a "fork." The extravagant man was told that he could clearly pay because he spent so much; the economical, because equally obviously he must have saved.[1] In his later years Henry carried his love of crooked extortion to morbid extremes. Men were prosecuted on false charges, and invited to buy their acquittal. One of the first and most popular acts of Henry VIII was to condemn to death two officials, Empson and Dudley, who had been the old king's instruments in this matter. It would have been well if Henry VIII had stopped there, and had not gone on to waste all the treasure thus unjustly accumulated.

Taxation

But the most original and interesting part of Henry VII's policy is that which revealed him as the leader and champion of his middle-class subjects. During the disastrous French War and the Wars of the Roses, England's mercantile marine and her naval power had decayed almost to vanishing point. Exports and imports

The new ships

[1] To-day, it may be noticed, we still tax both extravagance and economy; the former by taxes on luxuries, the latter by taxes on capital, such as death duties.

were for the most part carried in foreign ships, Breton, Portuguese, Venetian, and the ships of Hanseatic League of German coast towns. So the king himself went into business as a shipbuilder, and built himself what were perhaps the finest cargo vessels that had ever been afloat. The *Regent* was so large that she could not enter the king's chief harbour, so he moved the royal dockyard from Southampton to Portsmouth, and there constructed the first recorded dry dock. These ships served several purposes: the king could trade with them himself; better still, he could lease them to his merchants; best of all, he could teach such merchants, by the process of practical experiment, that they had better follow the king's example and build good ships for themselves. Then it became possible to protect the new mercantile marine by Navigation Acts, such as that declaring that French wines could only be brought to England in English ships; and to negotiate commercial treaties on favourable terms with our chief customers, such as the Flemish cities which bought our wool.

Henry's attention was early turned to Ireland as a centre of Yorkist intrigue, though "Ireland" for Henry's purposes meant no more than the strip of coast stretching from a little north of Dublin to Waterford, and called the English Pale. In 1495 one of his ablest middle-class ministers, Sir Edward Poynings, was sent out to assert the authority of the English crown over the Anglo-Irish baronage. He summoned an Irish parliament, which passed two laws that fixed the relations of Ireland to the English crown for nearly three hundred years. All English laws were to apply to Ireland also, and no law was to be introduced in the Irish parliament unless it had been approved by the king and his Privy Council in England. But Henry did not long persevere in his attempt to enforce order in Ireland through an English governor. Perhaps it was proving too expensive. In the next year he nominated as his Lord Deputy the Earl of Kildare, simply because he was the most powerful of the Anglo-Irish baronage.

Ireland and Scotland

If Ireland was an unruly dependency, Scotland was an

independent kingdom, and its king, James IV, had been one of the backers of Perkin Warbeck. As part of a treaty of alliance in 1503 Henry married his eldest daughter Margaret to this king, thus unconsciously laying the foundations of the union of the two crowns exactly a hundred years later. James I was the great-grandson of this marriage.

The foreign policy of Henry VII is hard to understand. The kings of the period now opening, the period of what in the last chapter we labelled "the New Monarchy," had a perfect passion for dishonest diplomacy. They were for ever negotiating with one another, proposing and accepting projects which they never intended to carry out, and coupling them with proposals of marriage between every eligible and ineligible prince and princess in Western Europe, from elderly widowers to infants in arms. Nothing is more wearisome and unprofitable than the detailed record of these things. We will note only a few projects which actually bore fruit. In 1489 Henry intervened half-heartedly to prevent the semi-independent dukedom of Brittany from being absorbed into the French kingdom, and in 1492 crossed with an army to Calais. His aims, however, were very different from those of Henry V. He knew that any attempt to conquer France, since the achievements of Louis XI, would be absurd. It was money he wanted, and after a few months' formal campaign he consented, by the Treaty of Etaples, to withdraw from the country in return for an indemnity equal to perhaps £6,000,000 of modern money. Part of it was actually paid. Charles VIII of France was already preparing for his foolish campaign in Italy, and was eager to buy Henry's neutrality. The other important achievement of Henry's continental policy was the marriage in 1501 of his elder son Arthur to Catherine of Aragon, the younger daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. Arthur died in the next year, but Catherine remained in England with a view to marriage with her brother-in-law, Prince Henry.

Foreign policy

Henry VII was hardly a great man. He was not very popular in his life-time, and he has not been found very interesting by posterity. But he was one of the most sensible

and useful of our kings. Unlike so many rulers of genius, he left his country in every respect much better off than he found it.

(ii) *Henry VIII and Wolsey* (1509–1527)

The young king

No English king was ever greeted upon his accession with such a chorus of enthusiasm as was Henry VIII, when he ascended the throne at the age of eighteen. And certainly he was a very fine fellow. Hear what his contemporaries said of him: "His Majesty is the handsomest potentate I ever set eyes on; about the usual height, with an extremely fine calf to his leg. . . . He speaks French, English, Latin and a little Italian; plays well on the lute and harpsichord, sings from the book at sight, draws the bow with greater strength than any man in England, and jousts marvellously. . . . He is very fond of hunting. . . . He is extremely fond of tennis, at which game it is the prettiest thing in the world to see him play, his fair skin glowing through a shirt of the finest texture. . . . He is very religious and hears three Masses daily when he hunts, and sometimes five on other days."

Wars with France and Scotland

Such a glorious creature could hardly be expected to abide by the sober and sordid counsels of his father. He seemed much more likely to spend than to save, to follow in the footsteps of Henry V rather than Henry VII. At his elbow and eager to direct his energies was Catherine of Aragon, six years older than her husband, and devoted heart and soul to the interests of her father, Ferdinand of Spain. Spain was fighting France for territory in Italy, and for the possession of the little kingdom of Navarre, which consisted of provinces on both sides of the Pyrenees. Would not England help? Of course it would. In 1512 an English force was despatched to the extreme south-west corner of France, to await the promised Spanish contingent, which never arrived. The English force rotted in inactivity throughout an unpleasantly hot summer, while the Spaniards pursued their own schemes and con-

quered the Spanish half of Navarre. Such a disgrace had to be avenged. In 1513 another English force was landed, this time at Calais, defeated the French at the so-called battle of the Spurs, and captured the great city of Tournai. It was the first English conquest on continental soil since the time of Joan of Arc. What might not follow?

But Henry VIII was already wiser than might have been supposed. He had learnt both the treachery of sixteenth-century alliances and the limitations of military success. Having won his victory and restored his honour, he adroitly deserted his Spanish ally and made peace with France on terms which would have satisfied Henry VII. He retained Tournai, secured an increase of the French pensions which had been paid off and on ever since the Treaty of Etaples, and married his beautiful sister Mary to the decrepit and dying widower, Louis XII (1514).

The war with France had entailed a consequence quite in accord with mediaeval traditions, namely a war with Scotland, which broke off the alliance made by Henry VII. Catherine of Aragon wrote to her husband in France that she was "horribly busy with making standards, banners and badges" for the army that was to repel the Scottish invasion. The result was the battle of Flodden, at which James IV of Scotland and most of the leaders of his nobility lost their lives in their defeat at the hands of the Duke of Norfolk.

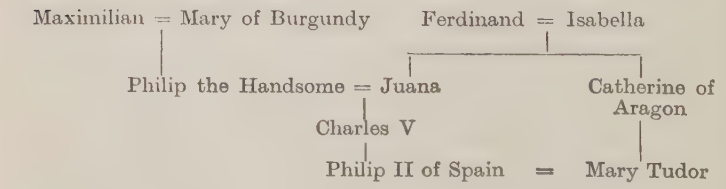
By this time Thomas Wolsey had already become the king's chief minister. He was the son of a wealthy wool merchant of Ipswich and, being both able and ambitious, had chosen the Church as the ladder by which he could most easily climb to a high position in the State. He was twenty years older than Henry, and had already made his mark at court before the death of Henry VII. He was extremely industrious, and Henry VIII, though from the first he took a shrewd interest in political affairs, was very glad of a councillor for whom no labours were too heavy, who would leave him free to amuse himself with his hunting, his jousting and his music. Within a few

Cardinal Wolsey

years Wolsey was Lord Chancellor, bishop of Lincoln, bishop of Tournai (Henry's French conquest, which was held till 1518), bishop of Winchester, archbishop of York, and Papal Legate. He also drew pensions from the continental sovereigns whom he from time to time favoured with his alliance. He hoped to become Pope. Never before or since has an English subject enjoyed such extraordinary pre-eminence as Wolsey secured and retained for about fifteen years; and his arrogance was more than equal to his power. Foreign observers declared that he was the real king of the country. Outwardly Wolsey appeared to agree with them. Perhaps in his secret mind he knew better; perhaps he realised that his tenure of power depended upon his continuing to please a master as able and unscrupulous as himself.

Wolsey's policy goes by the name of "the balance of power"; he is even credited, though wrongly, with inventing the somewhat obvious idea concealed behind that well-worn phrase. In 1515 Francis I became king of France, an ambitious, reckless man, intent on fresh adventures in Italy. In 1516 and 1519 died Ferdinand of Spain, a rival speculator in Italian conquests, and Maximilian of Austria, the nominal king of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor, who had married Mary, the heiress of Burgundy and the Netherlands. All the territories of both these rulers passed to their grandson, Charles V, who thus became the ruler of the widest empire since the days of the Roman Emperors. Francis and Charles were bound to

The balance of power


Maximilian = Mary of Burgundy
Ferdinand = Isabella
Philip the Handsome = Juana
Catherine of Aragon
Charles V
Philip II of Spain = Mary Tudor

come to blows. England was comparatively weak, for the population of England, which to-day is equal to that of

France, two-thirds that of Germany, and twice that of Spain, was in the sixteenth century far less than that of any one of these countries. Yet, by dexterously throwing the support of England from one side to the other, Wolsey imagined that he could make his country, and consequently himself, the arbiter of Europe. It was a policy aimed at prestige rather than at any really solid benefits, and it had one fatal flaw. Charles was the stronger of the two rivals, and it was, in fact, impossible for England to side actively with Francis against Charles, for that would cut off the English wool-growers from their market in the Netherlands, and ruin the chief industry of the country.

For a few years the game of bluff was played with complete success. In 1518 Wolsey had the glory of negotiating a treaty of peace between the two rivals in London. In 1520 he and his master ratified, amidst unprecedented pomps and vanities, a hypocritical alliance with Francis at the Field of Cloth of Gold, near Calais, neutralised immediately afterwards by a secret treaty with Charles in Flanders. But in 1522 the European War was renewed, England came in on the stronger side, and the balance of power was fatally upset. England's contribution was two futile little campaigns in France, 1522 and 1523, but Charles' armies destroyed the power of France at the decisive battle of Pavia (1525), and two years later sacked Rome.[1] It was in vain that Wolsey now set about trying to renew his alliance with France and to organise war against Charles. His game was up.

Meanwhile the nobles were weary of his arrogance and the middle classes of his extravagant expenditure. Only once was parliament summoned during the period of Wolsey's ascendancy, namely in 1523, and when it met it criticised the government very sharply. Its attitude reminds

[1] When the forces of the Christian Emperor sacked the capital of the Pope, more than half Germany, led by Luther, was in full revolt against the old Catholic faith. Meanwhile Suleiman the Magnificent, the greatest of the Turkish sultans, had conquered Hungary (1526, battle of Mohacz), and was about to attack Vienna. Christendom seemed perishing of its own political and religious discords.

us of the Stuart parliaments in the days of Charles I and Buckingham, rather than the docile parliaments of Tudor days. Henry VIII had observed all these things and was becoming thoroughly dissatisfied with his minister.

Henry VIII's battleships

It is difficult to know how active a part Henry played in shaping or controlling the foreign policy of the Wolsey period; but one department of state, ignored by Wolsey, he made entirely his own. He was an enthusiastic student of ship-building. Henry VII restored the mercantile marine; Henry VIII founded the modern navy. At that date the art of making heavy guns, such as would knock down a fortified castle, had been rapidly developed in the Netherlands. Henry determined to get such guns on to his ships, but they were far too heavy to be mounted on the "castles" such as had carried guns on the ships of Henry VII. It seems that an architect named James Baker solved the king's problem by putting the new guns into the hold of the ship, whence they could fire through "porte-holes," fitted with water-tight doors. We read of Henry piloting one of his new ships, in sailor's coat and trousers made of cloth of gold, and blowing its whistle "as loud as a trumpet." He had some excuse for doing so, for, in the judgment of a modern historian of the navy, he had "accomplished the greatest revolution that till then had ever taken place in sea-architecture." From that time onwards till the Armada the British fighting ships were the best afloat.

CHAPTER IV

THE REFORMATION PERIOD (1527–1559)

(i) *Henry VIII* (1527–1547)

THERE are many different opinions about the English Reformation. Some regard it primarily as a victory of new religious doctrines over old ones; others regard it as an assertion of national independence against the Papacy; others again see in it a victory of the State, embodied in king and parliament over the Church, a victory of the laity over the clergy; and others describe it as mainly an economic movement, a pillaging by the "new rich" of the wealthiest corporation of the mediaeval world. Some see in it but the last inevitable act of a drama which had been in progress for centuries; whereas others say that it was the product of immediate historical accidents such as the divorce of Catherine of Aragon. There is some truth in each of these views. The English Reformation had many causes and produced many results. It is true, for example, that Henry VIII, failing to get his way with the Pope in the matter of his divorce, turned in anger to his parliament and invited them to join him in destroying papal authority; but the invitation would not have been accepted but for the national hostility to the Papacy which had been growing up for centuries. Again, it is true that the Reformation involved new religious doctrines, but neither Henry VIII nor his parliament had any intention of doctrinal changes; all that came later and, so to speak, as an afterthought. No single simple formula will suffice to summarise the story this chapter has to tell.

Aspects of the Reformation

The first duty of a king, it has been said, is to govern; and his second is to provide an heir to succeed him. Henry had only a daughter, Mary. With the dubious and ill-omened exception of Matilda, the rival of Stephen, a queen had never reigned in England, and the drawbacks of female sovereignty were obvious. A queen would presumably be ruled by her husband; if he was an English noble he would provoke jealousy among his former equals, and if he was a foreigner he would neglect English interests. In 1527, the year of the sack of Rome, Catherine of Aragon was already forty-two, and unlikely to have more children. It was thus very much in the interests of the nation that Henry should be enabled to marry again. There were many people still alive who could remember the Wars of the Roses. There were still possible Yorkist claimants at large, and Henry betrayed his anxiety by imprisoning and executing various members of that unfortunate family both before and after this date. Now there was, as it happened, a technical pretext by which Henry might hope to get his marriage annulled. Catherine had been married to his brother Arthur, and his own marriage with her had only been made possible by a dispensation from the Pope. Would that Pope's successor, Clement VII, annul the dispensation? Popes had often done such things. But Catherine was the aunt of Charles V, who, since the battle of Pavia and the sack of Rome, had been the master of Italy and consequently of the Pope himself. Clement VII had to choose between offending the king of England and offending the ruler of Italy; and, very reluctantly, he chose the former as, for him, the lesser of two evils.[1]

The divorce question

The raising of this question placed Wolsey in a terribly difficult position. His foreign policy had failed, and he was hated by the nobility, and by the middle classes who controlled the House of Commons. He was the Pope's legate in England, and the champion of the privileges of the

[1] This famous "divorce" was not a divorce at all in the modern sense. A modern divorce terminates a marriage. Henry's claim was that no marriage had ever taken place. The granting of Henry's demand would make the king a bachelor and his daughter illegitimate.

Church. He was almost as anxious to secure the divorce as Henry, but if he failed, and the king took up in earnest his quarrel with the Pope, then Wolsey was doomed. Becket, long ago, had appealed from an anti-papal king to the religious sentiments of his age, but those sentiments had long ceased to count for much. Luther was already leading a religious revolution in Germany: Lollardry was still alive in England; and for every one genuine Lollard there were a hundred or a thousand who would be glad to see the papal jurisdiction abolished and the Church despoiled of its wealth.

Then occurred an unnecessary complication. Henry fell violently in love, perhaps for the first and last time in his life, with a rather commonplace young lady of his court named Anne Boleyn. It is not true to say that Henry decided to divorce Catherine because he fell in love with Anne, for the divorce had been discussed off and on for years before Anne Boleyn appeared on the scene. But his passion for Anne, which dates from 1527, quickened Henry's impatience to get the matter settled, and involved a disagreement with Wolsey. For Anne was related to the Howards, the family of the Duke of Norfolk, Wolsey's bitterest enemies, and Wolsey desired Henry to marry a French princess with a view to restoring the "balance of power."

Thus the Pope and Wolsey, for different reasons, both played for delay; but such a game could not be played for ever. In 1529 an Italian cardinal, Campeggio, was sent to London to act with Wolsey as a papal commission to try the case. But when the day came for him to give judgment, Campeggio adjourned proceedings for three months, and before the three months were up the Pope ordered that the case should be re-tried in Rome. It was enough. Henry immediately summoned a parliament, the first that had sat since the parliament that quarrelled with Wolsey six years before. Before parliament met, he deprived Wolsey of his secular office of Chancellor, and dismissed him to attend to the affairs of his diocese of

The fall of Wolsey

York. Six months Wolsey devoted to the simple religious duties he had hitherto neglected. But it was to him what "Elba" was to Napoleon, and he was detected six months later planning a return from it, and writing treasonable letters to Francis, Charles and Clement. In November 1530 he was arrested for treason, but death mercifully released him on his way to London. His celebrated last words, "If I had served God as diligently as I have served the king, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs," express the remorse of a prince of the Church who had all his days rendered lip service to religion and life service to politics. As such he was typical of the popes, cardinals and archbishops of the two hundred years before the Reformation. He was the last great statesman-ecclesiastic of England, and, for all his cleverness and industry, a failure. Unlike the great Tudor sovereigns, Henry VII, Henry VIII and Elizabeth, he left no permanent mark on the history of England.

King and Parliament

With the summoning of what was to be known as the "Reformation Parliament" in 1529, Henry VIII was at last to be revealed "every inch a king," the most powerful that ever sat upon the English throne. What was the source of that power? Not the royal army, for it consisted, we are told, of one hundred yeomen of the guard. Whenever Henry needed an army he had to go to his subjects and ask for it. The secret of Henry's power was that his policy thoroughly satisfied the most vigorous section among his subjects, the parliamentary middle classes, together with the "new nobility" which was already rising from the ranks of those middle classes. From 1529 onwards to the end of his reign Henry constantly summoned parliaments, often twice in a year. It used to be supposed that these parliaments were servile bodies, packed with the king's nominees or over-awed by his commands; but Mr. Pollard, the greatest modern authority on the Tudors, has shown that, in fact, under Henry VIII there was very little attempt at packing, and that such attempts as can be discovered were by no means always successful. He

shows also that Henry's parliaments frankly opposed such of the king's measures as they disliked, and that Henry accepted such rebuffs with good-humour and courtesy. Henry, in fact, is revealed as no tyrant, but as a sort of crowned Prime Minister, strong and resolute in his confidence that the great bulk of both Houses was loyal to the general scheme of his policy; a born leader of men, knowing well that if you want to get the best out of your team you must humour it and not attempt to drive it.

1529 is the date not only of the fall of Wolsey, and the beginning of the series of events which precipitated the English Reformation; it is also the date of the beginning of the modern history of parliament. In the last Book we saw how the mediaeval parliament arose and grew in power under the three Edwards, and attained its climax under the House of Lancaster; how it proved itself unfitted for the task which it took upon itself, of controlling the government; and how the Wars of the Roses marked its decisive failure. Though Henry VII had applied to parliament for the confirmation of his title and the establishment of the Court of Star Chamber, he had summoned but few parliaments, and Henry VIII during the Wolsey period had followed his example. Such a policy was not unpopular, for parliament was associated in people's minds with taxation rather than with "liberty," and even the prospective members regarded their duties as a burden rather than a privilege. But now Henry VIII, being about to carry through a revolutionary change, quite suddenly brought parliament to the front of the stage again.

These Tudor parliaments, however, were in many ways unlike their mediaeval predecessors. Then the centre of gravity had been in the House of Lords; it was now to be in the House of Commons; for the old baronage was but a shadow of its former self, and the new baronage was the king's creation, whereas, on the other hand, the commoners had grown in wealth and improved in education. The mediaeval parliaments had often taken the initiative against the Crown, and had invented impeachment; but no im-

peachments marred the harmony of the Tudor partnership. Ministers of whom the king had grown tired were put to death by Bills of Attainder carried at the bidding of the Crown itself. Tudor parliaments often opposed royal measures, but they never attacked the king's government. None the less it was under the Tudors that parliament was trained for the task it undertook against the Stuarts. The privileges of freedom of speech and freedom from arrest, asserted against James I, had been conferred by Henry VIII. One more difference remains to be noted. The mediaeval parliament was one among many; it can be roughly paralleled in the Estates General of France and the Cortes of the Spanish kingdoms. But all these died out in the age of the New Monarchy; in England alone, perhaps the greatest of all the "New Monarchs" took parliament into partnership, and the modern English parliament thus became a unique institution, and a model for continental countries to copy after the long centuries of despotism were ended by the revolutions of the nineteenth century.

The Reformation Parliament held a series of sessions extending over seven years. This in itself was a novelty, for no previous parliament had lasted more than a few months. And at the same time Convocation, the parliament of the Church, held its sessions, and unwillingly accepted the programme of reforms which king and parliament forced upon it. One half of this programme was the attack on the Papacy, and ended in the abolition of all forms of papal jurisdiction and papal taxation of the Church; the other half was the subjection of the Church to the Crown and the spoliation of its property.

Reformation by Acts of Parliament

In 1531 Convocation was bullied into recognising Henry as Supreme Head of the Church "so far as the law of Christ will allow," and in 1533 the death of Archbishop Warham, a survivor from Henry VII's days, enabled Henry to nominate Thomas Cranmer, a convinced upholder of the royal supremacy, as his successor. It was now only necessary to carry through parliament an Act forbidding all

appeals to Rome, and Cranmer would be entitled to grant the divorce, out of which the whole quarrel had arisen. Henry VIII had already married Anne Boleyn in anticipation of Cranmer's sentence that he had, in fact, always been a bachelor, and the child who was to be Queen Elizabeth was born a month after the sentence was announced. It is to the credit of Henry's subjects that the divorce of Catherine was the most unpopular part of his policy, but the wrongs of the injured queen counted for less than the rights of king *versus* pope and laity *versus* clergy. Now, at length the Pope issued a belated bull of excommunication. Henry replied by Acts abolishing all the remains of papal taxation, confirming the supremacy of king over Church, without any pious qualification about the "law of Christ," and decreeing that Henry's heirs by Anne should follow him upon the throne (1534, 1535). It was made treason to deny or question the legality of Anne's position. This was the mere beginning of a monstrous extension of the treason laws which ended in making almost any expression of opinion hostile to the king's policy a capital offence. It is said that when Henry lay on his death-bed, his physicians dared not tell him the truth, for "to prophesy the king's death" was treason by Act of Parliament.

A few humble persons, mostly friars, and two of the most distinguished Englishmen of the day, paid with their lives for their refusal to accept the royal supremacy. These two were Fisher and More. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, was notable as the only bishop who refused to accept the transference of supremacy from pope to king. More, the friend of Erasmus, the brilliant and charming author of *Utopia*, had long been a close friend of the king, and had accepted the Chancellorship on the death of Wolsey, being the first layman for several centuries to hold the office; but he, like Fisher, refused to take the Oath of Supremacy attached to the Act of Succession, and shared his fate. They were conscientious objectors to a popular cause. Their deaths horrified Catholic Europe, and proposals of a crusade against the heretic king passed

Opposition at home and abroad

to and fro between continental governments; but nothing of the kind was seriously intended. Francis and Charles were always either at war with one another or on the brink of it. Both centred their ambitions on Italy rather than England, and Charles, the more powerful, had his hands full with the Lutheran princes in Germany and the Turkish armies on his eastern frontier. The wool trade made it as difficult for Charles, as ruler of Flanders, to declare war on England as for England to declare war on him. In any case, an island kingdom, defended by the best navy of the day, was a tough proposition for any "crusader," and it is likely that, if an Armada had been launched against England at any time in the latter half of Henry's reign, it would have anticipated the fate of the Armada of 1588. We must never forget the Tudor navy as a factor in the success of Tudor policy.

Having finished with the popes, the "Supreme Head" turned in 1536 to deal with the monasteries.[1] The two typical institutions of the mediaeval Church were bound to stand or fall together. Both were supernational institutions and offensive to the new national spirit whose god was the king. In a real sense the monasteries were "garrisons of the Pope," and they were the homes of that type of religion which the new learning of the Renaissance despised as superstitious. Charges of immoral life had long been brought against the monks by friends as well as foes of the old Church organisation, but, even if the charge of immorality had some foundation, far more were merely dull and idle. The monasteries had once played a great and noble part in creating European civilisation, but their work was done, and they had survived their usefulness. However, the main cause of their downfall was their wealth; they owned perhaps a fifteenth of the cultivated land of England, and they fell not so much because the Tudor age worshipped God in a different spirit, as because it was ardently devoted to the worship of Mammon.

Dissolution of the monasteries

[1] The term monastery is popularly used to include the establishments of all the religious orders, *e.g.* the friars, as well as monasteries in the narrower sense of the word.

For some years past Henry had been employing as his agent for political and parliamentary business an old servant of Wolsey named Thomas Cromwell, a member of the family that afterwards produced the destroyer of Charles I. Thomas Cromwell's political views were very different from those of Oliver. He firmly believed in despotic monarchy, regarded the Turkish sultanate as the ideal constitution and Machiavelli as the best of political guides. To religion he was indifferent, but he regarded Lutheran protestantism as the winning cause, and he ultimately lost his head through an unwise attempt to involve his master in an alliance with the German Lutheran princes. This was the man whom the "Supreme Head" now appointed as his Vicar-General over the Church to report upon the condition of the monasteries. Cromwell's agents did what was expected of them, and produced as their report a horrifying and, no doubt, mainly fictitious picture of wholesale immorality and corruption. Accordingly the Reformation Parliament in its last session carried an Act dissolving all monasteries with an income of less than £200 a year. The remainder were dissolved by force, or by bribery of their abbots, in the course of the next four years.

The destination of the wealth of the monasteries was a most momentous question for the future of England. If Henry VIII had been Henry VII, he might have retained their wealth in his own hands and thus created an endowment for the Crown which would have enabled Stuart kings to snap their fingers at parliamentary opposition. He might, on the other hand, have acted nobly, in the spirit in which the mediaeval men who endowed the monasteries had acted, and devoted their wealth to the service of the highest ideals of his age; he might have given education such an endowment as it was not to possess until the Education Act of 1870, when at last the State undertook to provide education for all its children. Something, in fact, was done in this direction. Six new bishoprics were founded on the sites of dissolved monasteries; five "Regius" professorships were created at Oxford and at Cambridge; and provision was made to

The endowment of the new nobility

preserve a few grammar schools which had been attached to monasteries. But the great bulk of the wealth passed rapidly through the hands of the Crown, and was either given away or sold very cheaply to the leading families of the new "middle class." In fact, with the wealth of the Church was endowed a new aristocracy, the governing class of the Tudors, the leaders of opposition under the Stuarts, the authors of the revolution which overthrew James II, and the rulers of England until the nineteenth-century Reform Bills abolished "rotten boroughs," and transferred the control of parliament to the masses. It is significant that the Tudor period, which reduced the monasteries to picturesque ruins, also saw the building of the great "Elizabethan" manor houses. Sometimes, as at Bolton in Wharfedale, the ruin and the manor house are to be seen standing side by side.

The dissolution of the monasteries brought home to the common people the significance of Henry VIII's Reformation far more vividly than the separation from Rome, and provoked the only rebellion of Henry's reign, the so-called Pilgrimage of Grace. But it was a very small and half-hearted affair, and confined to the backward counties of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, where the great monasteries were still popular and useful. Its causes were by no means entirely religious. Its leaders were members of the old nobility, Percies and Nevilles and the like, who had never willingly accepted the strong monarchy of the Tudors, and the peasantry who flocked to their standard perhaps regretted the monasteries more as dispensers of charity than as centres of religious life. The rebels themselves were ardent in their professions of loyalty to the king's person. Henry tricked them into accepting an armistice until he had raised a force sufficient to cope with them, and the gentry of the south eagerly supplied him with two or three times the force he had asked for. After the rebellion had been suppressed Henry established a Council of the North at York, which extended the king's authority over those wide areas between the Humber and

The Pilgrimage of Grace

the Tweed which had remained a fragment of the Middle Ages long after the rest of England had moved onwards into modern times.

The essentials of Henry VIII's Reformation were compressed into the seven years of the Reformation Parliament (1529–1536). During the last ten years of the reign (1537–1547), the king was applying the bridle as often as the spur. An English national Church should clearly use the English language, so Henry authorised a translation of the Bible, ordering that a copy should be placed in every church. The Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments were to be recited in English, and Cranmer composed his beautiful Litany. But Henry was entirely opposed to the new doctrines which some of his bishops were introducing from abroad. He was an Anglican and not a Roman, but he was equally definitely a Catholic and not a Protestant. He was, it seems, genuinely attached to the ancient rites, already regarded as Romish superstitions by a growing minority of his subjects. Moreover, as an autocrat he disliked all innovations of which he was not the author, and as a practised judge of public opinion he saw that there would be little demand for the new doctrines and much opposition to them.

Limits of Henry's Reformation

Thus rival parties began to form within the Council; on the Protestant or radical side Cromwell, Cranmer, and Seymour, a leader of the new nobility, and the brother of Henry's third wife, subsequently Earl of Hertford and Duke of Somerset; on the Catholic or conservative side, the Duke of Norfolk, and Gardiner, bishop of Winchester. But Henry allowed neither party to rule him. In 1539 parliament passed the Act of Six Articles, affirming the principal Catholic doctrines and authorising the burning of any who denied the doctrine of transubstantiation, *i.e.* that the priest performed the miracle of converting the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. In the same year Cromwell was condemned by Bill of Attainder and executed. Two days later the deaths of six more victims neatly defined Henry's position, for

The growth of parties

three of them were priests hanged as traitors for denying the royal supremacy, and three were heretics burned for attacking Catholic doctrine. But Henry was no wholesale persecutor, and the total number of victims was small. In the last months of Henry's life, however, the balance tilted decisively in the Protestant direction. Norfolk was imprisoned in the Tower, and was only saved by the fact that the king died on the morning of the day fixed for his execution.

Henry's wives

The tragedies and comedies of Henry's later matrimonial adventures illustrate at various points the stages of his religious policy. Catherine of Aragon died in 1536, three years after her divorce, and Henry VIII proclaimed his delight by appearing the next day at a ball clad in yellow from head to foot, thereby proving, if proof were needed, that "though every inch a king, he never attained to the stature of a gentleman." Meanwhile Anne Boleyn had exhibited the same inability as Catherine to bear a male child. Henry grew tired of her, and was well aware of her unpopularity with his subjects. She was accused, probably unjustly, of adultery, convicted by a court composed of her enemies, and executed four months after the death of her rival. Eleven days later Henry married Jane Seymour, who died after giving birth to the future Edward VI. This marriage was made in 1536, the year of the dissolution of the monasteries, and marks Henry's alliance with the new nobility who were the chief gainers by that transaction. Three years later (1539) he was persuaded by Cromwell to marry Anne of Cleves, the daughter of a semi-Protestant German prince. This marriage marks the high-water mark of Cromwell's influence. Henry regretted the step almost as soon as he had taken it, on both personal and political grounds. Anne was plain, and Henry found he preferred the friendship of Charles to an alliance with his German rebels. Anne amicably accepted an immediate divorce, and Cromwell tottered to his fall. It was the year of the Act of Six Articles. The marriage with Catherine Howard, in 1540, marks an alliance with

the conservative Norfolk clan. Unhappily the lady was proved an adulteress and shared the fate of Anne Boleyn. Catherine Parr, the wife who nursed him in the painful illness of his last years, and survived him, was connected with the "radical" or Protestant party.

Henry's main interest in his later years was his attempt to make himself "emperor" of the British Isles. In 1536, he carried through parliament an Act of Union with Wales, dividing the Principality into shires which were henceforth to return members to parliament. With his love of uniformity, he sought "utterly to extirp the sinister usages and customs differing from" those of England, among which he included the Welsh language. But the publication of a Welsh Bible, in Elizabeth's reign, was an effective instrument for keeping the Welsh language alive.[1] Henry also interested himself in Ireland, assumed the title of King of Ireland in place of the title "Lord of Ireland" borne by his predecessors, and sent over in 1541 an able deputy, Sir Anthony St. Leger, who established peace and English control over a wider area than any of his predecessors. However, the policy of dissolving monasteries and destroying shrines and relics—including the crozier of St. Patrick—laid the foundation of the religious division which aggravated the old political feuds between the two countries.

Wales and Ireland

The breach with Scotland resulting from the Flodden campaign in 1513 had never been healed. Border warfare was incessant. The new king, James V, linked his fortunes with those of France, married Mary of Guise, and chose as his chief adviser Cardinal Beaton, archbishop of St. Andrews, an ardent papalist. In 1542 Henry demanded the immediate termination of the French

Scotland

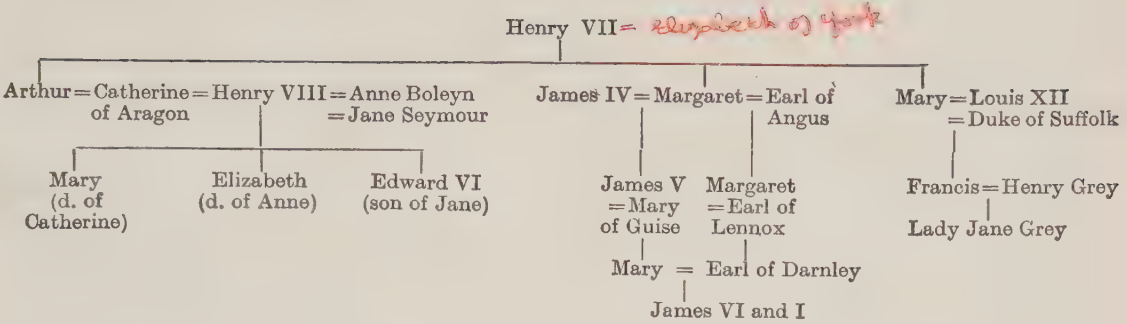
[1] Why has the Welsh language survived in full vigour, whereas the Irish language became nearly extinct before its recent artificial revival? Surely a chief cause of the contrast must be the fact that the Welsh became Protestants and translated their books of religion, whereas the Irish remained Catholic and continued to worship God publicly in Latin. The Irish refusal to accept the English religion left them defenceless against the inroads of the English language.

alliance and, on James' refusal, declared war. The Scots invaded England by the western route, and the Scottish king died after receiving the news of the destruction of his army at Solway Moss, leaving a daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots, only six days old. Henry immediately proposed that the infant queen should be entrusted to his keeping, and brought up to be the wife of his own heir, Prince Edward. But his methods were not conciliatory, for he also proclaimed his own right to the Scottish kingdom, and entered into intrigues for the overthrow of Cardinal Beaton. War with Scotland led to war with France, and Henry's prowess was illustrated in 1544 by the capture of both Edinburgh and Boulogne. In 1546 Francis accepted peace on condition that Boulogne was to remain in English hands for eight years, but Henry VIII got no nearer the real conquest of Scotland than Edward I had done, and he died bequeathing to his successor a costly incumbrance in Boulogne and an insoluble problem in Scotland.

Henry's best biographer describes him as "the most remarkable man that ever sat on the English throne."

Character of Henry VIII

That he was a good man his warmest admirers would never claim; he was, indeed, "Machiavelli's *Prince* in action." He was called upon to rule his country in an immoral and irreligious age; and his cruelty, his violence, his utter lack of what we should call decency, were readily forgiven by the people he ruled. His vices were their vices—magnified, no doubt, for everything about Henry VIII was on a big scale. Yet he had three of the greatest gifts of statesmanship—superb courage, an insight into the aspirations of the most influential classes among his subjects, and a good eye for discerning the line which separates the possible from the impossible. He left his mark on the English Church, the English navy, and the English parliament; he was also the greatest exemplar of that Divine Right of kings which parliament was to destroy.


Henry VII= Elizabeth of York
Arthur=Catherine of Aragon
Henry VIII=Anne Boleyn =Jane Seymour
James IV=Margaret=Earl of Angus
Mary=Louis XII =Duke of Suffolk
Mary (d. of Catherine)
Elizabeth (d. of Anne)
Edward VI (son of Jane)
James V =Mary of Guise
Margaret =Earl of Lennox
Francis=Henry Grey
Lady Jane Grey
Mary = Earl of Darnley
James VI and I

(ii) *Edward VI and Mary* (1547–1558)

The short reigns of Edward VI and Mary are curiously alike in certain respects. Each represents a violent oscillation from the "middle way" in religious policy adopted by Henry VIII. Each ends in complete failure, and in the discredit of the policy adopted—Protestantism under Edward VI and Romanism under Mary. In each case the religious policy chosen was discredited not only by its own demerits, but by other features that were found to accompany it—the rapacity of the new nobility under Edward VI, and the Spanish influence and the burning of Protestants under Mary. It was left for Elizabeth to return to the policy of Henry VIII with such differences of detail as the eleven intervening years had made necessary.

Edward VI was only nine years old, and his father had provided for him a Council of Regency, consisting mainly of members of the Protestant party.

Protector Somerset

This Council immediately appointed the king's uncle, Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, and now Duke of Somerset, Protector, with almost royal powers, and Somerset ruled England for the first half of the reign (1547–1549). His was a curiously mixed character, unique among Tudor statesmen. On one side, he was merely a typical member of the rapacious *nouveaux riches* of the age, and no man took a larger share of the pillage of the Church. His magnificent palace in London, still known as Somerset House, is an enduring monument of his ill-gotten wealth. On the other hand, he was an idealist, entirely out of sympathy with the harsh efficiency of Henry VIII's government. He secured the repeal of most of Henry VIII's new treason laws, and tried to protect the poor against the rich by prohibiting the system of robbery that went by the name of inclosures. But though the Council could give him the powers, they could not give him the prestige of a king. The poor long remembered him as "the Good Duke," but they were not in a position to give him any political support, and to his colleagues in the government his idealism

seemed mere foolishness. "Liberty, Liberty!" wrote one of them; "and your grace would have too much gentleness."

His first exploit was to prove the absurdity of Henry VIII's Scottish policy. He invaded Scotland, and won a bloody victory at Pinkie, as a result of which Queen Mary, aged five, was carried off to France, to be brought up a Frenchwoman and married in due course to the heir to the French crown.

The religious policy of the new government might be defined as Protestantism and pillage. Archbishop Cranmer, a fine scholar and a genuinely religious man, had long been inclining towards the doctrines of the continental reformers, and had ceased to believe in the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. Some of his disciples, such as Ridley and Latimer, preached openly against Catholic doctrines without hindrance from the government, and Bishop Gardiner, the leader of the Catholic party, was removed from the Council and placed under arrest. The result was religious anarchy. "Every parish church became the scene of religious experiment. In some places sacred pictures were whitewashed and painted windows and organs destroyed. In others, the use of English in the service was enough to cause a popular commotion. Bonfires of heretic books alternated with bonfires of carven images, and priests and preachers were alike mocked and hustled." The first English Prayer Book, together with an Act of Uniformity, enforcing its use, was issued in 1549. It is, in most respects, the Prayer Book we have to-day, and it is the imperishable monument of Cranmer's literary genius, but it proved utterly ineffective as an instrument for re-establishing order and decency in 1549. Its policy of avoiding extremes of doctrine, and offering old familiar prayers in English translations, was derided by the enthusiasts of both parties.

Religious anarchy

The laymen of the government were less interested in Cranmer's experiment than in the renewal of the pillage which Henry VIII had begun. Chantries, colleges and gilds now suffered the fate that had already befallen the monasteries. It had been the custom of pious and wealthy men in the Middle Ages to bequeath

Pillaging of the chantries

money for the foundation of "colleges," which might be schools or hospitals or societies for the furtherance of any good object, such as the provision of pensions and funeral expenses, and to set apart some portion of these funds for the endowment of "chantry priests," as they were called, to sing Masses for the soul of the founder. The whole doctrine of Purgatory—"Purgatory pick-purse" as Latimer called it—and with it all prayers for the dead, was denounced by Protestants as a Romish superstition. So all chantry funds, it was argued, ought to be abolished, or rather transferred to the living, that is, the *nouveaux riches* who controlled the government. It was tempting and easy to secure in many cases not only the confiscation of the chantry funds, but of the whole of the "college" with which the chantry had been associated. These confiscations swept away a large number of schools, and it is one of the ironies of history that Edward VI has won the name of a great promoter of education owing to the fact that some, but by no means all, of these schools were refounded as grammar schools.

In 1549 there were risings and disorders in almost every part of England. The western rebellion, in Cornwall and Devon, was a protest of the country-folk against the new English services, which they found irreverent and "like a Christmas game." Exeter refused to join the rebels and was besieged for six weeks, and the rebellion was suppressed, mainly by German and Italian mercenaries, after two battles, at St. Mary Clyst and Sampford Courtenay.

The western rebellion

Elsewhere the causes of discontent were economic rather than religious, and Norfolk, the scene of the most formidable rising, was one of the most Protestant counties in England. Some time before the Tudors came to the throne there began what is called an "agrarian revolution," though "revolution" is a misleading word for describing a very gradual process of change. The growth both of the export of wool and of woollen manufactures encouraged a gradual turn-over of land from tillage to

Inclosures

sheep-farming. The attraction of sheep-farming for the landowner was that it effected a welcome reduction in his wages bill; its drawback for the worker was that it caused unemployment. Sheep-farming involved "inclosures." The word inclosure in itself means no more than the fencing round of hitherto open land, to prevent the beasts from straying. If the lord simply inclosed land hitherto farmed by himself as arable land, there might be hardship through unemployment, but hardly injustice. He was also entitled, no doubt, to eject his tenants from his estates in order to enlarge his sheep-run. But inclosure involved injustice as well as hardship when, as often happened, the lord seized and inclosed the commons [1] on which the poor had as good a right to pasture beasts and gather firewood as he had himself. In fact, the pillage of the Church was the work of a class that had long been occupied in pillaging the poor. It was estimated in 1548 that inclosures had been responsible for throwing 300,000 people out of work. The estimate was a mere guess, and was probably a great exaggeration; but the number of the unemployed was great, and there was no system of provision for them. Even the monasteries, the traditional dispensers of charity, had gone.

In Norfolk a force of 16,000 men, under Robert Kett, a tanner and small landowner, established themselves on Mousehold Heath outside Norwich, and seized the city. Their only demand was the liberation of the common lands. Somerset sympathised strongly with them, and was prepared to make large concessions. This was too much for the Council, who took the matter out of the Protector's hands and sent Warwick to suppress the rebels. Warwick stormed the camp on Mousehold Heath, slaughtered some 3000 of the peasant forces, and hanged several hundreds of his prisoners, including Kett himself.

Kett's rebellion

[1] The inclosure of commons went so far that the word "common" to-day suggests a piece of waste-land, nearly all the economically valuable common-land having long ago been stolen and made private property.

The next step was to depose Somerset. He was sent to the Tower, and, though released a few months later, his position of Protector was not restored to him. Warwick succeeded him as ruler of England, and Somerset drifted into the position of "leader of the opposition." Leaders of opposition played a dangerous game in Tudor times, and Somerset was again arrested, condemned to death on an absurd charge of treason, and executed in January 1552.

The fall of Somerset

Warwick, who now became Duke of Northumberland, was the son of Henry VII's unpopular minister, Dudley, and the father of the Earl of Leicester who flirted with Queen Elizabeth. He was perhaps the most complete scoundrel that ever governed England, for he easily beats his possible rivals, such as Richard III, by adding an unctuous and hypocritical enthusiasm for the Protestant religion to his other and manlier vices. In fact, he gambled recklessly on the prospects of the new faith, and authorised the definitely Protestant "Second Prayer Book" of 1552, but his real interest was a desperate plot to secure the crown for his own family.

Northumberland's plot

Edward VI was dying, and his crown would pass in the normal course to Mary, whom neither threats nor cajolements could induce to abandon the faith with which her mother's honour was inextricably linked. Henry VIII had regulated the order of succession among his children by a will, which had received parliamentary sanction. Northumberland proposed to follow his example. Edward VI was proclaimed of age, though he was only fourteen, and was induced to draw up a will bequeathing his crown to his cousin, Lady Jane Grey, a grand-daughter of Henry VIII's younger sister, Mary, who had married the Duke of Suffolk after the death of Louis XII of France, her first husband. At the same time Northumberland secured Lady Jane as the wife of his own son, Guilford Dudley. Time was short and parliamentary sanction had not been asked, but the arch-conspirator sought to implicate as many persons as possible in his scheme, not only councillors, but also bishops,

judges and merchants, by getting them to put their signatures to the dying king's will. These people were placed in a most awkward predicament. To sign was to make an enemy of Mary, to refuse was to make an enemy of Northumberland; ultimately a hundred of them signed, including Cranmer, and Cecil, the future minister of Elizabeth.

The will was drawn up on June 21, 1553. On July 6 Edward died, and Northumberland's fantastic scheme collapsed like a house of cards. English people were very uncertain as to their religious ideas, but they were quite certain that they preferred the House of Tudor to the House of Dudley. All England was for Mary, and on July 21 Northumberland found himself in the Tower. In a desperate attempt to save his head this "Moses of the Reformation," as he had been called, professed himself convinced of his religious errors, and gave an edifying exhibition of Catholic devotion before a selected audience of London citizens; after which he was very properly executed on Tower Hill. It may be that his behaviour led Mary to suppose that all English Protestants were made after this pattern. If so, she was to find herself very grievously mistaken.

Accession of Mary

Mary was thirty-seven years old at her accession, but she seemed older; for destiny, or rather her own father, had treated her very cruelly. From the age of twelve onwards she had witnessed the long-drawn agony of her mother's divorce, and at the age of twenty, when her mother died, she was compelled to make terms with her father by admitting that her mother had never been legally married and that she was herself a bastard. In the later years of Henry VIII's reign her bastardy was repealed by Act of Parliament and she was restored to her place in the royal succession, but under Edward VI she underwent another period of persecution, which she endured with the utmost courage, refusing to abandon the practice of her religion. She was—and it is not saying much, perhaps—the most virtuous of the Tudors. Her policy was perfectly simple. It was to restore her country to the Roman faith.

And the means she chose were perfectly simple also, though unwise, namely marriage with the greatest Catholic prince of the day, Philip, son of Charles V, who was just about to become, by his father's abdication, king of Spain and ruler of the Netherlands.

Parliament made no difficulty about restoring the Mass and sweeping away all the religious innovations of Edward VI's reign. But papal supremacy was accepted only with great reluctance, and on condition that no attempt would be made to recover the pillaged property of the Church from its present owners. In fact, the worldly-wisdom of Henry VIII's policy was strikingly demonstrated.

No parliamentary assent was needed for the marriage with Philip, but the mere publication of the marriage treaty, though it excluded Philip from all authority in England and stipulated that England and Spain should never be united under the same ruler, provoked instant rebellion in Kent, under Sir Thomas Wyatt. Yet Wyatt's rebellion, like all Tudor rebellions, was easily suppressed; it provided, however, a pretext for the execution of Lady Jane Grey and her husband, who had been prisoners in the Tower since the failure of Northumberland's plot. Lady Jane was only sixteen, but the brilliance of her intellectual gifts and the beauty and strength of her character were already apparent. She died with a quiet and steadfast heroism equal to that of Sir Thomas More or Sir Walter Raleigh, quietly reciting the Fifty-first Psalm until the axe fell, the most innocent and pathetic of all the victims of Tudor politics.

The Spanish marriage

In 1554 the royal marriage was accomplished, the papal supremacy restored, the Protestant bishops deprived of their sees, and Cardinal Pole, as virtuous a fanatic as Mary herself, installed as archbishop of Canterbury and papal legate. Parliament re-enacted the laws permitting the burning of heretics which had been repealed under Somerset, and all was in readiness for the persecution which was expected to reveal the craven hypocrisy of Protestantism. Hooper, bishop of Gloucester, the first

The Marian persecution

victim, was burnt at a slow fire before the year was out. Ridley and Latimer shared his fate at Oxford in 1555. Cranmer followed them in 1556. The aim of Mary and Pole was to secure not victims, but recantations, and in Cranmer, the most eminent of their victims and the judge who had pronounced the divorce of the Queen's mother, they seemed to have secured a success which would outweigh a hundred failures. Cranmer was no Protestant fanatic. He was a scholar who knew how much could be said for and against both schools of doctrine, and as a politician he had always consistently upheld the royal supremacy over the Church. Ought he to abandon the policy of a life-time when the royal supremacy and his own conscience took different sides? So at first he thought, and, hoping perhaps also to save his life, he made his famous recantation. But this did not prove his last word. By recanting his recantation and thrusting the hand that had penned it first into the flames, Cranmer snatched a Protestant victory from the very jaws of defeat.

In all nearly three hundred martyrs suffered for the cause, a trifling number if compared with the victims of Alva in the Netherlands or the victims of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in France, but more than enough to ruin the cause of Rome in England. The verdict on Mary's policy was pronounced in advance in the imperishable words of Latimer to Ridley at the stake, "We shall this day light such a candle in England, by God's grace, as I trust shall never be put out." Hitherto Protestantism had been associated with pillage and Northumberland; henceforth it was ennobled by the memory of the martyrs. Their record was enshrined in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, published early in Elizabeth's reign, which became at once and remained for generations a popular classic. It is, however, notable that, apart from the little group of bishops, nearly all the martyrs were humble and obscure persons. No wealthy layman, no profiteer of the pillage, died for the faith he had found so profitable.

Mary had set her heart on bearing a child to whom she

could transmit her crown and her policy, but the passage of time brought her not motherhood, but an incurable disease. In fact, the Spanish alliance, besides stiffening her subjects against a policy which they supposed, quite wrongly, to have been dictated by Philip, brought a series of heartrending complications. The Pope, who was, as so often, an Italian politician rather than a mitred missionary, set himself to overthrow the Spanish control of Italy by means of an active alliance with France. France, at war with Spain, made a raid upon Scarborough, and Mary found herself at war not only with France, but with the Papacy, and the Pope deprived Cardinal Pole of his legatine authority. The French, led by the brilliant and vigorous Duke of Guise, captured Calais, which fell almost without resistance. Ten months later Mary died with the name of Calais, she said, written upon her heart. When her death was made known, "all the churches did ring, and at night men did make bonfires and set tables in the street, and did eat and drink, and make merry for the new queen."

The loss of Calais

(iii) *The Elizabethan Settlement* (1559)

The daughter of Anne Boleyn, who now became Queen Elizabeth at the age of twenty-five, had had fully as chequered a journey from the cradle to the throne as the daughter of Catherine of Aragon. When she was three years old her mother had been executed and she herself declared illegitimate. A few years later she was restored to her place in the succession and educated with her brother Edward at Old Hatfield House, which is now the Marquess of Salisbury's stables. No one has ever explained why Northumberland did not select her rather than Lady Jane Grey as the instrument of his plot for excluding Mary from the throne. At any rate, she owed her life to this piece of good fortune, and when Northumberland collapsed she rode by Mary's side in her triumphal entry into London. Yet Mary was inevitably jealous of her sister. Elizabeth spent two months

Early adventures of Elizabeth

in the Tower after Wyatt's rebellion, and might well have been executed if any shred of evidence connecting her with the rebellion had been brought to light. After her release she lived quietly at Hatfield. Parliament firmly resisted all proposals that she should be excluded from the succession, and, as the clouds gathered and darkened round Mary, Englishmen looked forward more and more to Elizabeth's accession to rescue them from the toils of Rome and of Spain. She was, as she boasted, "mere English," and that fact was to be, throughout her reign, the chief source of her strength and popularity.

The religious problem

Elizabeth's personal religion always remained a mystery; perhaps it would be nearly true to say that she had not got any. But this was no disqualification for the task before her. We shall all agree to-day that it is beyond the capacity of any government to discover and establish religious *truth;* what was urgently required of Elizabeth's government was that it should establish religious *peace,* and her own indifference preserved her from partisan fanaticism such as would render peace impossible. The situation at Elizabeth's accession can only be described as chaos. Mary's Roman restoration was a proven failure. There were no well-defined religious sects in the country, but rather infinite and imperceptible gradations ranging from Marian Romanists to extreme Protestants who wished to adopt the Calvinistic system of democratic religious self-government such as Knox was about to establish in Scotland. The saving factor in the situation was that the great bulk of Englishmen were not particularly interested in religious controversy, but were, on the other hand, intensely patriotic and would be ready to accept a national settlement simply because it was national. Hence the general idea of the policy Elizabeth and her advisers should, and did, pursue was plain. The settlement must be a *via media* or middle course; it must be broad and even vague in its definitions, so as to satisfy as many conflicting views as possible; and it must be cautiously enforced. To persecute would only be to advertise and encourage the dissatisfied.

The policy may be defined as a return to the system of Henry VIII with a cautious admixture of Protestant doctrines. Elizabeth's Prayer Book (which we still use) combines the phrases of the first, or Catholic, and the second, or Protestant, Communion Services of Edward VI's Prayer Books in such a way that the worshipper may find in the service whichever doctrine he wishes to find. Henry VIII's offensive title, "Supreme Head of the Church," was dropped, but the royal supremacy was effectively secured. The scheme was laid before Elizabeth's first parliament, in 1559, in an Act of Supremacy and an Act of Uniformity. Convocation rejected it, and the bishops in the House of Lords opposed it. Thus the settlement marked the final triumph of the laity over the clergy, of the State over the Church. We may, in fact, note from this point onwards a change in the very meaning of the word "Church" as commonly used. In the Middle Ages "the Church" had meant the clergy as opposed to the laity: henceforth it means the adherents, lay and clerical, of the State Church as opposed to Romanists and Dissenters, the extremes which the Elizabethan settlement failed to conciliate.

The Settlement of 1559

Only one of the Marian bishops accepted the Settlement. The rest were deprived of their sees, but otherwise not ill-treated. Cardinal Pole had most opportunely died on the same day as Queen Mary, and the new archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker, was a man exactly suited to the part he was called on to play. Dignified, scholarly and pious, he had yet not been sufficiently pious to be worth burning with Latimer and Ridley. He "reverenced monarchy, loved decency and order, and nothing shocked him so much as violent enthusiasm." Most of the other bishops were men of the same calibre; never before, since Augustine had landed at Canterbury, had bishops been such unimportant pieces on the political chess-board.

Such was the Elizabethan settlement. Its aim was the comprehension of all Englishmen in the State Church. Judged by the standard its authors set for it, it failed. None the less it preserved religious peace in England for nearly a

hundred years—until the Puritan Revolution of Charles I's reign. And during that hundred years religious civil wars, in France, Germany, and the Netherlands, shed blood like water. After the Puritan Revolution, the Elizabethan Settlement was triumphantly restored, and, later on, James II was driven from the country because he showed signs of reviving the policy of Mary. We consented to be ruled by a Dutchman and by Germans rather than part with the Elizabethan Settlement.

None the less, elements of opposition, both Romanist and Protestant (or Puritan as it came to be called), held their ground. We may complete this chapter by showing how Elizabeth dealt with each of these opposition parties.

Romanist and Puritan opposition

For seventeen years no Romanist or Puritan suffered death for his faith. In the twenty-seven years that followed persecution was reluctantly revived, and the number of victims, nearly all Romanist, attained, by the end of the reign, about two-thirds of the number of the victims of Mary. In fact, some writers who dislike Queen Elizabeth have suggested that she deserves, like her sister, the title of "Bloody." But popular instinct is generally just in its application of nicknames. Mary was a religious persecutor, pursuing an un-English policy. Elizabeth was a national leader, and her government never put any one to death without a strictly political reason, whether good or bad.

From the beginning of her reign onwards Elizabeth's throne was threatened by Catholic powers of the Continent who professed to regard her as a bastard and a usurper. This attitude was officially sanctioned by the Pope when he excommunicated Elizabeth in 1570. From that date onwards Elizabeth's life was continually threatened by Romanist conspiracies. The first English Jesuits, trained in continental colleges, landed in 1580, and the Spanish Armada itself was a Romanist crusade. These facts placed patriotic Englishmen, honestly adhering to the Roman faith, in a tragically difficult position. If Elizabeth inherited her father's religious policy she also inherited her grandfather's love of money; and in general one may say that she contented herself with

fining Romanist laymen who did not involve themselves in Romanist politics, and executed only priests, Jesuits, and conspirators. Her policy in this matter was ardently supported by parliament.

The Puritans occupied a very different position, for they had no dealings with any national enemy, and were among the most patriotic of Englishmen. None the less, Elizabeth believed, and no statesman in any country in that age would have disagreed with her, that religious uniformity and religious discipline were essential for the preservation of law and order. The Puritans were not, for the most part, Dissenters, though small sects began to appear as the reign advanced. They came within the Church, and immediately set themselves to get it "improved," and purged of "Romish superstitions" such as surplices. They quickly began to assert in parliament the claims which ultimately brought them to war with the government of Charles I. Elizabeth's second archbishop, Grindal, boldly defended the Puritans, and refused to suppress their meetings (1577). He was at once suspended from his duties, and when he died (1583) Elizabeth chose as his successor a man after her own heart in Archbishop Whitgift. Whitgift's policy was identical with that of Charles I's Archbishop Laud, and the Court of High Commission, created to assist him, was, in fact, a replica of the Spanish Inquisition in all respects except that it was not empowered to inflict the death penalty.

Some of these Elizabethan Puritans were splendid fellows. In 1579, when Elizabeth was pretending to be about to marry, for political reasons, a singularly odious French prince, John Stubbs, a gentleman of Norfolk, published a pamphlet entitled *Discovery of a Gaping Gulf, wherein England is like to be swallowed up by another French marriage, if the Lord forbid not the banns by letting her see the sin and punishment thereof*. Stubbs was condemned to have his right hand publicly struck off. After the sentence had been executed he waved the bloody stump and cried "Long live the Queen," after which he was imprisoned for eighteen months in the Tower.

CHAPTER V

ELIZABETH (1558–1603)

(i) *England and Scotland*

1559, the year of the Elizabethan Settlement, was also the decisive year in the history of the Scottish Reformation.

Protestantism in Scotland, as in Germany, France and Holland, had begun as a rebel movement led by popular preachers. One of these, named Wishart, had been burned in 1546, and his friends had retorted by assassinating Cardinal Beaton, and calling for English help against the French Catholic government of Mary of Guise. But though Somerset invaded Scotland and won the battle of Pinkie the next year, the Protestant rebels, among whom was John Knox, capitulated to a French fleet at St. Andrews, and Knox spent nineteen months in the French galleys. Mary of Guise continued to rule Scotland for thirteen years, but, though a woman of fine character and splendid courage, she was a foreigner, relying upon foreign councillors, and Protestant opposition developed among the nobles and the middle classes. The movement was in part genuinely religious, in part nationalist and anti-French, and in part, especially among the nobles, mere greed for the spoliation of the Church, which owned a far larger fraction of the wealth of the country than in England.

Mary of Guise

Meanwhile Knox, released from the galleys, came to England and played a part in the religious activities of Edward VI's reign, refusing an English bishopric. After Mary's accession he returned to the Continent and visited Geneva, where he studied the remarkable Presbyterian system established by Calvin. By 1555 he was back in Scotland, and in 1557 the nobles banded themselves together in a Covenant, under the title of Lords

The Lords of the Congregation

of the Congregation, to throw off both the authority of Rome and the French government. War broke out in 1559, and, while Mary of Guise, besieged in Edinburgh Castle, begged help from France, the Lords of the Congregation begged help from England.

Elizabeth was very reluctant to oblige them, for she disliked rebels of all sorts, particularly Calvinists, but the arguments in favour of securing a friendly Scotland, detached from France, were too strong to be resisted. The Council at her accession described the French king as "bestriding the realm with one foot in Calais and the other in Scotland." So a treaty was made with the Scottish rebels at Berwick, and an army under Grey and a fleet under Winter were sent to assist them. Mary of Guise died, and the French garrison was compelled to surrender, in 1560. By the Treaty of Edinburgh the French undertook to withdraw from Scotland, and to leave the government in the hands of Elizabeth's allies, the Scottish nobles.

Elizabeth intervenes in Scotland

These events mark a decisive epoch in the history of Anglo-Scottish relations and also in the history of Scotland itself. They may be called the foundation of the union between the two countries. Never before had an English force returned from Scotland leaving a grateful nation behind it. The predominant classes of society, both in England and in Scotland, had committed themselves to Protestantism. Arrayed against both were a minority of their own nation, the English Romanists, whose chief strength was north of the Humber, and the Scottish Romanists, whose chief strength was north of the Tay; and behind these minorities there were the great Catholic powers of the Continent, ready to intrigue, and to intervene more actively if occasion offered. Scotland, like England, had a queen of her own, but that queen, Mary Stuart, had been brought up as a Frenchwoman and a Catholic. She was soon to return, a stranger, to her own country. Inevitably the Scottish Kirk quarrelled with her and turned for support to the Protestant queen of England.

In purely Scottish history the establishment of the Kirk is a not less decisive event. Hitherto Scotland had been a barbarous country, of no account in the history of European civilisation. There was much that was harsh and unlovely about the Scottish Kirk, but its honest adherents were men of terrific energy, alike in thought and in action, and its democratic system of Church government taught the Scots the arts of self-government. The Scotsman of modern history, vigorous, shrewd, argumentative, remarkably well-educated, "canny" and self-controlled, is the creation of the Scottish Kirk.

An achievement of this kind can never be the work of a single man, but the Scots themselves attribute to John Knox an enormous importance in the development of their national character, and they are probably not mistaken. From his return to Scotland till his death in 1572 he was the heart and soul of the Kirk. He combined a fiery fanaticism in religion with a shrewd eye for political expediency. Though ruthless as an enemy, he had a kind heart and a strong sense of humour. His powers were revealed at their fullest in the pulpit. "This one man," said an English ambassador, "was able in an hour to put more life into us than five hundred trumpets." Though the son of a peasant, called upon to work with nobles in a country still entirely feudal, he never cringed, as Luther sometimes cringed, to powerful allies. At his funeral one of the greatest of the nobles declared that "he neither feared nor flattered flesh."

William Cecil, Lord Burghley

The Scottish alliance had been recommended to Elizabeth by William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burghley, who was already her chief councillor, and retained that position for forty years. History has perhaps never done justice to Burghley, in spite of the fact that he was chief minister of the Crown for a far longer period than any other Englishman, and the reasons for this are obvious enough. He was, as has been said, "an expert in taking cover." This art, which had carried him safely through the reign of Edward VI and Mary, was henceforth to protect him from the attention of historians. Elizabeth

and Cecil, in fact, entered into partnership, and we content ourselves with ascribing the actions of both to the "head of the firm." It was characteristic of Cecil that he preferred to state arguments both for and against a suggested course of action, and to leave the queen to draw her own conclusion. It would be quite wrong to suppose that Cecil directed Elizabeth's policy for her; none the less, it is difficult to over-estimate her debt to this shrewd, cautious, worldly-wise and devoted councillor. He was twelve years her senior, and when he came to die, at the age of seventy-seven, Elizabeth, aged sixty-five, helped to nurse him in his last illness. Like all the great Tudor ministers, he was of humble origin, being grandson of a Stamford innkeeper.

Eight months after Elizabeth's accession, Mary, Queen of Scots, had become Queen of France as wife of Francis II. Seventeen months later she was left a widow, and those seventeen months had witnessed the down-fall of her mother's rule in Scotland, which she had been powerless to avert. She returned to Scotland in 1561, being still only nineteen. If Mary had been "mere Scots" as Elizabeth was "mere English," she might perhaps have adopted the new-found religion of her people, and reigned prosperously, for she had brains and courage, and all the arts that make for popularity. But she could never bring herself either to like or understand the rough nobles and crude psalm-singers of her native country. From the first she regarded the Scottish throne as a stepping-stone to the throne of England, which she had claimed ever since the death of Mary Tudor, and it was a stepping-stone that from the first rocked beneath her.[1] She looked for help abroad, and hoped to marry Don Carlos, the son of Philip of Spain, but Philip, who valued Elizabeth's friendship as a counterpoise to the power of France, was opposed to the match. After four years in Scotland she married her cousin, Lord

Mary, Queen of Scots

[1] Mary's claim was good by genealogy, if Elizabeth was a bastard, as all Romanists were logically bound to assume; but it was barred by Henry VIII's will, sanctioned by parliament, which had preferred the descendants of his younger sister Mary (such as Jane Grey) to the Scottish line descended from his elder sister Margaret.

Darnley, a Catholic nobleman descended from Margaret of England and James IV of Scotland. When she bore a son, the future James VI and I, in 1566, the future seemed to be hers, for Elizabeth was unmarried and childless. "The Queen of Scots," cried Elizabeth when she heard the news, "is mother of a fair son, and I am but a barren stock."

The fall of Mary Stuart

But thereafter tragedy rapidly closed round the Scottish queen—tragedy so wild and terrible as to remind us that the plots of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* were less far removed from the realities of sixteenth-century politics than we are apt to realise. Darnley was a disagreeable young fool, and Mary could ill conceal her contempt for him. Three months before the birth of their son, he had conceived a jealousy of her Italian secretary Riccio, and had joined with other nobles in murdering him. Mary fell in love with a brave, ruffianly earl of the border, named Bothwell, who murdered Darnley, probably (though the truth is still disputed) with Mary's connivance. Three months later, in May 1567, Mary married Bothwell.

This was the signal for a rebellion of the Scottish nobles. Their motive was not moral indignation, for several of their leaders had been privy to the plot against Darnley; it was simply jealousy of Bothwell's sudden elevation to the throne. Behind the nobles was the Kirk, led by Knox and his fellow-preachers, who had from the first treated Mary as a Romish Jezebel. Mary gathered her supporters around her, but she was forced to surrender at Carberry Hill, and was imprisoned at Loch Leven, and forced to abdicate in favour of her infant son. In the next year, 1568, she escaped, but was defeated at Langside and fled to England.

Mary in England

Elizabeth had publicly expressed a sympathy with Mary which was probably quite genuine, for she never liked rebels, even though she often found herself compelled to support them. However, Mary's arrival in the North of England kindled such enthusiasm among the Roman Catholic population that Elizabeth quickly forgot her sympathy in genuine alarm. Mary could not be safely sent back to Scotland, nor allowed to proceed to

France. So she was kept in confinement, first in one northern stronghold and then in another, till the day of her execution nineteen years later.

The years immediately following Mary's arrival in England have been called the crisis of Elizabeth's reign. It was, in fact, a crisis more formidable than the Armada, for when the open attack from Spain came, twenty years later, the success of Elizabeth's policy had established her position securely in the hearts of all but a minute fraction of her subjects. In 1568–1571 the peril was from within more than from without, and hence more formidable. In 1569 there was a rebellion under the northern Catholic aristocracy, led by a Percy and a Neville, the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland. Its motive was not merely championship of the Catholic claimant as such, but a final protest of the still mediaeval North against the whole Tudor system with its strong central authority administered through middle-class officials—the old nobility *versus* the new. The rebellion failed, and indeed its leaders were incompetent and half-hearted.

The crisis of Elizabeth's reign

In 1570 the Catholic world declared war. Elizabeth was excommunicated, and a plot, called the Ridolfi plot from the name of an Italian agent in London, was formed to marry Mary to the Duke of Norfolk, assassinate Elizabeth, and land a Spanish army. But Elizabeth's ministers displayed, for the first but not the last time, the remarkable efficiency of their spy system for detecting conspiracies. The Spanish ambassador was expelled from the country, and Norfolk was executed. Many more plots of a similar character followed, always with the same result. After the last of them, Babington's plot of 1586, Elizabeth was persuaded by the parliament and her ministers to allow the trial and execution of her rival, in January 1587.

Meanwhile James was growing up in Scotland as the prisoner and pupil of Elizabeth's Scottish allies. Mary's ill-fated marriage with Darnley had indeed proved for Elizabeth a piece of luck to which it would be hard to find a parallel in history. Elizabeth, it is believed,

James of Scotland

knew that she could never bear a child, and therefore she had every reason to avoid the political inconvenience of a husband. Yet what she needed above all things was an heir, and her grief and vexation at the news of the birth of an heir to Mary are easily understood. When Mary fell she left her child with her enemies, who were Elizabeth's allies, and the heir of Mary's body grew up to be the inheritor of Elizabeth's policy.

(ii) *England and Europe*

We saw, in an earlier chapter, that the three "new monarchies," France, Spain and Austria, all plunged, during the reign of Henry VII, into a series of wars for dominion in Italy; and that, early in Henry VIII's reign, two of these monarchies, Spain and Austria, were united under Charles V. During the reign of Mary Charles V had abdicated, dividing his dominions. Austria, with the title of emperor, passed to his brother Ferdinand, from whom descend the Austrian Hapsburgs, the last of whom was deposed at the end of the Great War. Spain, the Netherlands, and the conquests of Cortez and Pizarro in America passed to his son Philip II. At the same time the Italian Wars were drawing to a close, the campaign in which England lost Calais being one of the last. In 1559 a final peace was concluded at Cateau-Cambrésis. Spain secured the Italian provinces of Naples and Milan; France secured smaller but more valuable extensions of territory nearer home—the four fortresses of Metz, Verdun, Toul and Calais. The treaty closed an epoch and opened a new one which coincides almost exactly with the reign of Elizabeth, the epoch in which France is distracted by the Huguenots, and Spain by the Dutch rebellion.

A new epoch

"The Netherlands" consisted of seventeen provinces, covering the whole of modern Holland and Belgium and what is now French Flanders. Under Charles V they had been fairly contented, but Philip II was determined to abolish their local customs and privileges, and to bring them under direct Spanish control. Hence

The Dutch rebellion

arose a movement of opposition which was not at first definitely Protestant, but was led by the nobility, Catholic and Protestant alike, seeking to preserve their feudal authority—a movement, in fact, for "home-rule" within the Spanish empire. Philip, however, was not prepared to compromise. Alva, a stern and vigorous soldier, was appointed governor in 1567. Egmont and Hoorn, two Catholic leaders of the nobles, were executed, and a ruthless persecution of Protestants, which had begun in the last years of Charles V, was coupled with a crushing system of taxation.

Of those who fled from the tyranny of Alva, some betook themselves to the sea and, under the name of "Sea-beggars" carried on an organised system of piracy against Spanish commerce. In 1572 the Sea-beggars landed and seized Brille, near Flushing. This was the signal for a general revolt of the seven northern provinces, where Calvinism of the Scottish type had gained a strong hold, and William of Orange, previously a Catholic leader of the nobility, became a Calvinist and put himself at the head of this Protestant and democratic movement. A ferocious war began. Alva was recalled, but none of his successors, not even Alexander of Parma, the greatest soldier of the day (governor from 1578–1592), was able to subdue the Dutch. The ten southern provinces, however, which were mainly Catholic, came to terms with Spain. Thus the Netherlands came to be divided into what we call Holland and Belgium. "Belgium" remained the "Spanish Netherlands" until in 1713 it passed to Austria. After the fall of Napoleon it was united with Holland, but rebelled against this arrangement in 1830, and was then constituted as an independent kingdom with its neutrality guaranteed by all the Great Powers. "Holland,"[1] on the other hand, became, under the title of the United Provinces, the first republican nation of modern Europe, its first President, or Stadholder, being William of Orange,

[1] Holland in the sixteenth century was not the name of the whole country, but only of the most important of the seven United Provinces, the district containing Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

called "the Silent," who was assassinated by an agent of the Spaniards in 1584. He was, after an interval, succeeded by his son, Maurice of Nassau.

While Spain was losing Holland, she secured what seemed ample compensation in another quarter. In 1580 the royal line of Portugal came to an end, and Philip, who had claims to the Portuguese throne through his mother, a Portuguese princess, easily conquered the country and thereby annexed the whole empire of Portugal in the East Indies. This had very important consequences for the English and the Dutch, for it meant that the whole Portuguese empire as well as the Spanish empire was, when war began, the prey of our seamen. The British and Dutch East India Companies, both founded near the end of Elizabeth's reign, destroyed the empire of Portugal in Asia at the time when Portugal was annexed to Spain. Portugal reasserted her independence in 1640, but by that time her empire, except Brazil and some territories in Africa, had almost entirely disappeared.

Union of Spain and Portugal

In France Francis I, the rival of Henry VIII, had died in 1547, and had been succeeded by Henry II, who was killed in a tournament in 1559, leaving an Italian widow, Catherine de' Medici, and four sickly sons, all of whom were to die without children, thus bringing the Valois line to an end in 1589. The first son was Francis II, the first husband of Mary, Queen of Scots. After his death in 1560, Charles IX reigned and Catherine de' Medici ruled. Her policy in religion was really much the same as Elizabeth's. Being herself indifferent to religion, she was above all things anxious to secure religious peace by any form of compromise available. But she failed as decisively as Elizabeth succeeded, and indeed her position was far more difficult. She was herself a foreigner and only a regent, and France was far larger and harder to govern than England. The strong and bitter Calvinism of Geneva penetrated the middle classes of the great provincial towns, especially in the south, and a considerable section of the nobles took up Calvinism as a badge

French wars of religion

of feudal independence. The country-folk, on the other hand, and the city of Paris, in fact three-quarters or more of the population, were fanatically Catholic. Catherine's favourite policy was toleration, but it pleased neither party. They simply refused to tolerate one another. A wearisome series of religious wars fills the whole period, the leaders on the Catholic side being the Guises of Lorraine, and on the Protestant side Coligny, who was the first victim of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, 1572, and afterwards Henry of Navarre. The Crown was forced to ally itself now with one party and now with the other. The famous "Massacre" began as an assault on Coligny and the Huguenot nobles, who had temporarily secured an ascendancy over the weak mind of Charles IX.

Charles IX died in 1574. Henry III, having murdered the Duke of Guise (son of the conqueror of Calais), was himself assassinated in 1589. The fourth brother, known first as Alençon and afterwards as Anjou, had died in 1584. Thus the Huguenot Navarre became the legitimate claimant of the throne. The Catholic League was prepared to fight him to the death, and proposed various alternative claimants. Philip of Spain supported them, and hoped to secure the French crown for himself. But at last patriotism triumphed over religious fanaticism. Henry of Navarre accepted the Catholic faith in 1593, saying "Paris is worth a mass." The Guise faction were subdued; the Spaniards were driven from France, and in 1598 the Edict of Nantes, granting toleration to Huguenots in specified districts (which excluded the city of Paris), was accepted as a workable compromise by both parties. Thus, in an hour of extreme weakness, was laid the foundations of Bourbon France, which grew, under Richelieu and Louis XIV, to be far the greatest power in Europe.

England, under Elizabeth, was closely interested in all these events. The essence of her position from the first was that, whereas both Spain and France would have liked to overthrow the heretic queen, neither was willing to allow the other to do it. Elizabeth's reign, from the standpoint of European affairs, may be

Elizabeth's foreign policy

divided into two periods of unequal length. In the first, which covers about ten years and ends with the fall of Mary, Queen of Scots, France is the enemy, and Philip consequently an unwilling friend and even a suitor, at first, for Elizabeth's hand. In 1563 Elizabeth made an unwise and unsuccessful attempt to regain Calais by an alliance with the rebel Huguenots.

The diplomatic revolution

But as France fell more and more into the abyss of religious anarchy, the French government lost interest in Mary, Queen of Scots, and the plots to rescue her from her English prison were of Spanish origin. At the same time, English seamen were more and more falling foul of the Spanish authorities on the high seas, and Elizabeth's government transferred its patronage from the Huguenots to the Dutch Calvinists. Thus France became an ally, in spite of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and Elizabeth entered on a long hypocritical courtship with Alençon (or Anjou), the youngest of the Valois princes. After the murder of William of Orange in 1584, Elizabeth intervened openly on behalf of the Dutch, and sent an army under the Earl of Leicester, which fought the Spaniards at Zutphen, where Sir Philip Sidney was killed. Then came open war with Spain; and England, Holland and France, under Henry of Navarre, joined forces in a kind of informal alliance.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this "diplomatic revolution," or "swapping of partners" in the middle of Elizabeth's reign. So long as France was the enemy, we aimed at the recovery of Calais, and looked backward to the policy of Henry V. As soon as Spain had become the enemy, our ambitions were transferred to the New World, and we looked forward to the era of colonisation and, in fact, the modern British Empire.

THE WORLD
as known
at the End of the
16TH CENTURY
English
French
Spanish
Portuguese
Route of Sir Francis Drake
1577 – 1580
Spitzberge
Arctic Circle
Iceland
GREENLAND
Davis Str.
Frobisher B.
Labrador
SCOTLAND
IRELAND
Plymouth
La Rochelle
PORTUGAL
Cadiz
Newfoundland
NORTH
AMERICA
NEW
FRANCE
New Albion
San Francisco
VIRGINIA
Bermudas
Azores
Madeira
Mogador
Canaries
Florida
Bahamas
HISPANIOLA
SAN DOMINGO
Cuba
NEW
SPAIN
Mexico
California
WEST
INDIES
Trinidad
Cape Verde Is
GUINEA
Sierra Leone
Gold
Coast
Cartagena
NEW
GRANADA
QUITO
Guayquil
R. Amazon
PERU
Callao
Lima
BRAZIL
SOUTH
AMERICA
R. Pisagua
Ascension
St Helena
Rio de Janeiro
Valparaiso
Juan Fernandez
River Plate
Tristan da Cunh
Falkland Is
Magellan's Straits
Tierra del Fuego
Cape Horn
Spanish Portuguese
Line of Demarcation 1494
1579
1580
1578
120
90
60
30
0
75
60
30
0
30
W. 120
90
60
30
0

30
60
90
120
150
Nova
Zembla
Archangel
Moscow
POLAND
RUSSIA
Astrakhan
BOKHARA
A S I A
MONGOLIA
LEVANT
PERSIA
TIBET
CHINA
(CATHAY)
EGYPT
ARABIA
Ormuz
Hindostan
Mushat
INDIA
Macao
Tropic of Cancer
NUBIA
Socotra
SIAM
Philippines
Ladrones
Carolines
ABYSSINIA
Ceylon
Malacca
Mindanao
Borneo
I. of Reefs
Ternate
1579
ETHIOPIA
Equator
Sumatra
Amboina
New Guinea
Solomon Is
Isabel de la Estrella
Java
Timor
Madagascar
Mascarenhas
Mauritius
Tropic of Capricorn
of Good Hope
1580
Spanish Portuguese Line of Demarcation 1529
75
60
30
0
30
60
90
120E
150
Cribb & Co., dirl. et sc

(iii) *Oceanic Adventure and the Spanish War*

We have seen, in an earlier chapter, how Spain and Portugal had discovered and monopolised New Worlds, east and west, in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. England's only contribution at that time had been a few voyages, under the Genoese John Cabot, in Henry VII's reign, which, lighting on nothing more attractive than Newfoundland and Labrador, had discouraged further effort. The revival of the spirit of commercial adventure began under Edward VI. Wyndham opened up trade with Morocco and the Gold Coast, and Chancellor made his way into the White Sea, travelled to Moscow, and thus laid the foundations of the Muscovy Company. Chancellor's object had been to find the north-east passage to "the Indies." The theory was that, as Spain and Portugal respectively had secured the south-west and south-east passages (round "the Horn" and round "the Cape") England should try for the north-east or the north-west. The north-east passage was soon pronounced impossible. In Elizabeth's reign a series of assaults were made upon the north-west passage, and the names of their leaders —Frobisher and Davis, and, under James I, Hudson and Baffin—are written upon the maps of that inhospitable region; but the north-west passage proved as ice-bound as the north-east. The English explorers were as gallant as the Spanish and Portuguese, but what they discovered happened to be useless. The oceanic future of England lay with those who preferred to poach upon the preserves of Spain and Portugal.

English voyages of discovery

In 1562 John Hawkins of Plymouth began his career as a slave-trader. He captured unfortunate negroes in Africa, and sold them to Spanish colonists in America, often coming to blows with the Spanish coast-guard officials in the process, for though the Spanish colonists might be glad to buy his wares, he was encroaching upon the monopoly of the Spanish government. In 1567 his fleet was nearly destroyed by a Spanish attack at San Juan de Ulua, treacherously delivered during a truce.

Hawkins and Drake

Elizabeth, who had herself taken shares in Hawkins's venture, retorted the next year by seizing some Spanish treasure ships destined for Alva, which had been driven by the Huguenot "sea-dogs" into English ports. Four years later Drake, who had been with Hawkins at San Juan de Ulua, sacked the Spanish port of Nombre de Dios, on the isthmus of Panama. Five years later again, in 1577, Drake set out on his famous voyage round the world, with the secret approval and support of Elizabeth, though the cautious Burghley did not approve of his sovereign's partnerships with Hawkins or Drake until a later date. Drake rounded the Horn, looted Valparaiso, captured the annual Peruvian treasure ship, sailed northwards as far as where San Francisco now stands, annexing the district under the name of New Albion; then westwards and home by the Philippines and the Cape of Good Hope. Elizabeth knighted him on the deck of *The Golden Hind* in return for her share of the plunder. In 1585 Drake again raided the Spanish West Indies. In 1587, when the Armada was known to be preparing, he sailed to Cadiz with twenty-three ships, four of them from the royal navy, and captured or destroyed all the vessels in the harbour. This was called "the singeing of the king of Spain's beard."

Was this war? Not officially, for both Philip and Elizabeth were the most cautious and peace-loving of statesmen, and both kept up a pretence of peace long after the reality of it had disappeared. When, then, did the war begin? The answer is a matter of opinion, for, strangely enough, no official declaration of war was ever issued by either side. However that may be, the English offensive of 1587 was followed by the Spanish offensive of 1588, when Philip claimed the English throne—for was he not descended from John of Gaunt?—and sent his Invincible Armada to secure it for him.

The Spanish war

The old traditional "legend" of the Armada is perhaps nearly dead nowadays, but one never knows, for legends take long to die—the legend that the Spanish fleet and the Spanish ships were vastly larger than the English; that England won, as it were, by a

The Armada

miracle, and only with the help of the weather. The sober fact is that the Armada was doomed before it sailed. That was the opinion of the soldier (not a sailor), Medina Sidonia, on whom Philip thrust the command; it was also the opinion of Drake and his comrades; and of intelligent neutrals like the Venetians. In numbers the fleets were about equal,—about a hundred ships on each side, about half in each case being regular warships, and the others armed merchantmen. But the Spanish ships were loaded with soldiers for the invasion, and had only about half as many professional sailors as the English. They were also inferior in the range, size, and number of their guns, and were slower. They stood higher out of the water, owing to difference of build, but were about equal to the English in tonnage. The weather favoured the Spaniards until after the contest had been decided, and the storm only wrecked an already beaten fleet. The aim of the Armada was to convoy Parma's army from Calais to England. When the English had driven the Spanish fleet past Calais, by means of the famous attack by fireships, the Spanish objective was lost. The decisive naval action was fought off Gravelines the next day. The storm came afterwards and turned defeat into overwhelming and hideous ruin.

In the next year the English made an attack on Lisbon, but it was a failure. In fact, though the war dragged on until the end of Elizabeth's reign, there were few striking successes except an expedition to Cadiz under Raleigh and Essex in 1596. The Spaniards gradually learnt the lessons of naval efficiency from their enemies, and were stronger at the end of the war than at the beginning. The Spanish war proved that England was impregnable in defence, but it proved no more than that.

The second expedition to Cadiz

The Spaniards sought to attack England through Ireland, and Elizabeth therefore carried to completion, at long last, the English conquest of Ireland which had been begun more than four centuries before in the reign of Henry II. It was a murderous business on both sides.

Conquest of Ireland

The enemy were the great chieftains of the West and the North, the Desmonds in Munster and the O'Neills in Ulster (not yet colonised from Scotland), backed from time to time by Jesuit emissaries and Spanish gold. The conquest was completed by Lord Mountjoy in 1601, and as though to remind the Irish of the nature of their relations with England, the Dublin prison, which has housed many Irish rebels of a later day, bears his name.

While Drake was busy plundering Spanish commerce, other Elizabethan sailors conceived the idea of planting an English colony in some region of the New World unoccupied by Spain. Sir Humphrey Gilbert saw in colonisation a solution of the unemployment problem, which, as we have seen, was as serious in Tudor England as it has ever been since, and he obtained a royal charter authorising him to make the attempt. His venture in Newfoundland, in 1583, was a total failure, and he lost his life on the voyage home. His half-brother, Sir Walter Raleigh, took up the idea, and wisely aimed further south. Sir Richard Grenville (afterwards, in 1591, the hero of the famous fight of *The Revenge*[1] against fifty-five Spanish ships), took command in 1585 of the expedition which Raleigh planned and financed, and landed in "Virginia." But neither this nor a subsequent attempt in 1587 succeeded in establishing a permanent colony. The successful establishment of our first American colony was the work of John Smith, and dates from 1606, when Elizabeth was dead and Raleigh a prisoner in the Tower.

Beginnings of colonisation

In 1591–1594 Sir James Lancaster, sailing to India by the Cape, broke into the Portuguese monopoly, and brought back such profits that the East India Company was founded in 1600. But perhaps the most romantic of all the achievements of Elizabethan seamen was that of William Adams, who reached Japan in the same year, *via* the Horn. There "he made his home and married

India and Japan

[1] *The Revenge*, far from being "little" as Tennyson describes it, was a kind of "Dreadnought," and none of the Spanish ships was, taken singly, its equal. Otherwise, of course, Grenville's fifteen-hour fight would have been not merely heroic but miraculous.

a Japanese wife; he built the first navy of Japan, and lies buried on a hill overlooking Yokosuka. A street in Tokio bears his name, and an annual celebration is still held in honour of the Elizabethan seaman who forged the earliest link between the great naval powers of the East and West."

(iv) *Some Domestic Affairs*

When Elizabeth came to the throne, her Council summarised the state of the country in the following brief memorandum: "The Queen poor; the realm exhausted; the nobility poor and decayed; good captains and soldiers wanting, the people out of order; justice not executed; all things dear; excesses in meat, diet and apparel; division among ourselves; war with France; the French king bestriding the realm, having one foot in Calais and the other in Scotland; steadfast enemies, but no steadfast friends"; and it must have been tact rather than forgetfulness that restrained them from adding "the Roman Church discredited, and no substitute for it found."

Character and achievement of Elizabeth

No reign in English history begins so low, progresses so steadily, and ends so high and glorious as Elizabeth's. The daughter of the most unpopular of Henry's wives, a bastard in the eyes of all logical-minded Roman Catholics, she lived to be, in the eyes of nearly all her subjects, something almost more than a mere mortal queen, something that perhaps no mere man could ever quite become, the very embodiment of Britannia. Among all our sovereigns only Victoria attained a like position, and Victoria reigned, but did not govern. And yet historians have much to say against Elizabeth. She was, we are told, coarse and vulgar in her manners, unlike those perfect ladies born and bred, Mary Tudor and Mary Stuart; she was mean in all matters of money, ungrateful in her treatment of her most devoted servants, a hardened flirt, a practised liar. It is all true, and, if space allowed, evidence could be produced to prove every count in the indictment. We are all familiar with the simple, old-

fashioned verdicts—a bad man but a good king, a good man but a bad king. Elizabeth the woman had many glaring faults, but as a queen she was "mere English." From first to last she devoted herself to the welfare of her country, and she brought to her task extraordinary judgment, patience and skill.

We have already reviewed the affairs of the Church, the relations with Scotland and Ireland, France and Spain, and the expansion of English enterprise over the High Seas. It remains to pick out a few items of Elizabethan history that fall under none of these headings.

It is characteristic of Elizabeth (who alone of the later Tudors had the virtues of the founder of the line, Henry VII) that one of her first measures was to stop the debasement of the currency by the issue of false coin[1] which had been practised by Henry VIII, Northumberland and Mary, and to re-establish a sound currency. Currency reform

Throughout her reign Elizabeth was extraordinarily economical. No doubt one motive was the desire to avoid summoning parliament, which only met ten times in the course of her forty-five years. She had none of Henry VIII's love for that institution; for parliament was apt to annoy her by suggesting reforms in the Church, and asking her when she was going to marry. Elizabeth always maintained that her authority over the Church was absolute, and outside the sphere of parliament. She also held, and probably rightly, that she was a better judge of what the nation wanted in the way of religious organisation than the parliamentary middle class, who were already inclining strongly towards puritanism. As to her marriage, she kept her secret that, even if married, she could never bear a child, and was consequently irritated by well-meant proposals based on an ignorance of this essential fact. For parliament, in asking for a husband, was asking for an heir, which Elizabeth could not give. Parliament

[1] This proceeding is exactly equivalent to issuing excessive paper money, as was done by many Continental governments during and after the Great War.

Low taxation had other advantages besides an avoidance of frequent parliaments. It assisted the revival and extension of trade; and the extension of trade reduced unemployment and helped to alleviate the miseries caused by inclosures. Burghley did valuable work in introducing new industries. He imported Germans to teach Englishmen the art of making guns and gunpowder. Thousands of Protestant refugees from France and the Netherlands brought new industries with them—silk, lace and pottery and the manufacture of the finer kinds of cloth, hitherto imported from abroad.

Improvement of trade

In 1563 parliament passed an Act of Apprentices, which was an attempt to settle some of the industrial problems of the day. Farm servants and artisans were to be engaged by the year; and unless a man could prove that he had been regularly apprenticed to a trade, he could be compelled to work as an agricultural labourer. This provision seems to show that trade and agriculture were competing in the labour market, and that unemployment was disappearing. The statute also offers a solution of the wages problem; wages in the various trades were to be fixed by the Justices of the Peace of each county. This system remained in use for nearly two hundred years, until the Industrial Revolution began to change the conditions of trade so rapidly that the Justices abandoned all attempt to fulfil this part of their statutory duties.

Labour legislation

But then, as now, there were many who could not earn a living—the disabled who could not work, the idle who would not work, and the unemployed who wanted work and could not find it. Henry VIII had ordered the churchwardens of each parish to raise money by voluntary contributions for the relief of the disabled and the employment of the able-bodied poor. But the voluntary system proved inadequate, and Elizabeth's parliament of 1572 ordered the Justices of the Peace and the mayors of the towns to assess every householder at a definite sum for poor relief, proportionate to the value of his house and land. Here we have the origin of the poor

The Poor Law

rate which all householders still pay. At the same time the "valiant beggar" who would not work was to be "grievously whipped and burnt through the gristle of the right ear." Elizabeth's parliaments returned again and again to the problem of the poor, and the last parliament, in 1601, codified all the enactments which had proved valuable, in one Poor Law, which remained in force until the Industrial Revolution.

The Armada divides the reign into two unequal periods, the earlier being just twice the length of the later. The queen's essential work was done in the first thirty years. She gave her country the longest period of peace that it had enjoyed since the reign of Henry III. When the war came at last, England had grown strong, resolute and united. The failure of the Armada revealed in a flash that England had nothing to fear from the Great Powers.

The two periods of the reign

> "Come the three corners of the world in arms
> And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,
> If England to itself do rest but true."

So Shakespeare wrote about seven years later, in the last lines of his *King John*.[1]

The last fifteen years were for England years of triumph, and they were adorned by the flowering of Shakespeare's genius, but for Elizabeth herself they marked an anti-climax. "The queen seems like an actor lingering on the stage after his part has been played. She loses touch with her people; crown and parliament come into sharper conflict; the breach with puritanism widens. . . . The House of Commons is girding itself for its hundred years' war with the Crown. . . . The Tudor period is dissolving into the Stuart." [2]

[1] *King John* is a typically Elizabethan play, not only in what it emphasises, but also in what it omits. It emphasises the struggle with the Papacy and with France, the Pope's ally—by an odd coincidence the King of France was called Philip II! It entirely omits Magna Carta; for the Elizabethan Englishman was indifferent to self-government in the parliamentary sense. Magna Carta worship begins with the parliamentary controversies of the next reign.

[2] A. F. Pollard, *English Political History*, 1547–1603.

Elizabeth's last parliament

The parliament of 1601 was extremely dissatisfied with the growth of monopolies. The Crown had been making money by selling to favoured individuals the sole right to deal in certain articles of common consumption, such as salt and sweet wines. The cost of salt, for example, had been multiplied by eleven since it had been made subject to a monopoly. The House of Commons was very indignant. Elizabeth executed a masterly retreat, summoning the members to Whitehall, and delivering an address to them in which the sublime and the ridiculous are curiously mingled. "That my grants (of monopolies) should be grievous to my people, and oppressions privileged under our patents, our kingly dignity shall not suffer it. Should they escape unpunished that have oppressed you, and have been respectless of their duty and regardless of our honour? No, Mr. Speaker, I do assure you. . . . I have ever used to set the last judgment-day before my eyes so as to rule as I shall be judged to answer before a higher Judge: to whose judgment seat I do appeal that never thought was cherished in my heart that tended not to my people's good." Thus Elizabeth, neatly deserting and reprimanding her partners in the crime, restored her popularity. The members wept for joy. The kings who were to follow her would not succeed in drawing tears so easily; for Elizabeth had saved her country, and they had not.

CHAPTER VI

TUDOR LITERATURE AND ART

CHAUCER had died in 1400, the year after the deposition of Richard II, and the age of Lancaster and York, though it witnessed the composition of much spirited and beautiful popular poetry in the form of ballads and carols, was barren of great names in the history of literature. The progress of literature and art in Tudor times may be described as a slow trickle which swells suddenly to a flood at the end of the period.

Early in Henry VII's reign a few scholars, among them Colet, afterwards founder of St. Paul's School, were teaching in Oxford the Greek scholarship they had acquired on the continent. But the Greek classics came to the Tudor writers mainly through translations. Shakespeare, for example, got the Plutarch on which he based his Roman plays from North's translation, which was itself translated not from the Greek, but from a French version. One of the most interesting Greek scholars was Roger Ascham, at one time tutor to Elizabeth. He was also a patriot, and one of his works, *Toxophilus*, is a defence of the long bow against the harquebus or musket.

Greek scholars

> "Through Christ, King Henry, the Book, and the Bow
> May all manner of enemies quite overthrow."

may not be good poetry, but it is sound Protestant patriotism.

The greatest literary work of Henry VIII's reign was More's *Utopia* (1516), but it hardly belongs to English literature, as it was written in Latin for the benefit of the educated public of Europe, and was only translated into English fifteen years after its author's execution. Like Plato's *Republic*, it describes an

More's "Utopia"

ideal community, but More, writing in an age of geographical discoveries, locates his ideal in an imaginary island discovered by an imaginary explorer. In *Utopia* there is no poverty, and no idle rich; education is universal; women as well as men are admitted to the priesthood, and there is no religious persecution. In later years, when Protestantism began to raise its head in England, More himself proved false to this last Utopian principle, and became an eager champion of the persecution of Lutherans.

The Elizabethan prose writers fall short of the poets, but some of them should be remembered. Few books were more popular in their day than Lyly's *Euphues*, published in 1579. It is a kind of novel, and it exercised a most unfortunate influence on style. Lyly simply refuses to call a spade a spade, to tell a plain story plainly, and "euphuism," or the art of wrapping up one's meaning in all manner of high-flown conceits, infected nearly all the poets of the Elizabethan age. Shakespeare satirises euphuism in the person of Osric in *Hamlet*, but he is himself not free from the fault he satirises, as may be seen, for example, in the speech of the "bleeding sergeant" at the beginning of *Macbeth*.

Elizabethan prose

Very different in style and in value is Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594), the first great literary defence of the Church of England against the attacks of the Puritans. Hooker denies the Puritan contention that everything can be settled by reference to Biblical texts, and rises to a noble eloquence in his defence of the religious uses of art, particularly of Church music.

Bacon published his first collection of *Essaies* in 1597. Their close-packed brevity and ripe worldly wisdom sets them apart from the work of all later essayists. These short essays provide models of the art of plunging right into a subject without superfluous introductory verbiage. Take, for example, the opening of the essay on *Truth:* "What is Truth, said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer"; or the essay on *Gardens:* "God Almighty first planted a garden; and indeed it is the purest of human pleasures." The rest of Bacon's literary work, including his

History of the Reign of Henry VII, the first genuinely critical piece of English history-writing, belongs to the reign of James I, as does much of what is popularly called "Elizabethan literature."

Raleigh was a writer as well as a man of action. His *History of the World* (which he carried down to the death of Tiberius Gracchus in 131 B.C.) was composed during his long imprisonment under James I. It is not read to-day, but it contains one of the most famous passages of English prose:

> "O eloquent, just and mighty Death, whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded: what none hath dared, thou hast done, and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised. Thou hast drawn together all the far stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words: *hic jacet.*"

Modern English lyric poetry begins, in the reign of Henry VIII, with the poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt, the father of the leader of the rebellion against Queen Mary, and the Earl of Surrey, son of Norfolk the victor of Flodden. Both write, like true lyric poets, about themselves and their own emotions, loves, joys and sorrows. Wyatt wrote the first English sonnet, a metrical form imported from Italy, and his song, "Forget not yet," is to be found in most anthologies. The sonnet was carried to far greater perfection by Sir Philip Sidney, in his long series of love sonnets, *Astrophel to Stella*, which doubtless provided the model for Shakespeare's still more famous work in the same line. Sidney seldom displays Shakespeare's genius in maintaining the same high level of inspiration from the first line of a sonnet to the last, but his openings are often extremely beautiful. For example:—

Wyatt, Surrey and Sidney

> "With how sad steps, O moon, thou climb'st the skies!
> How silently, and with how wan a face!"

and,

> "Come, Sleep; O Sleep! the certain knot of peace,
> The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe—,
> The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
> Th' indifferent judge between the high and low."

But the greatest Elizabethan poet, apart from Shakespeare, was Edmund Spenser, the first part of whose *Faery Queen* was published two years after the Armada. Only six of the twelve "Books" of the poem were ever written, but even this fragment constitutes about the longest poem in the English language.[1] The poem is designed as an allegorical romance describing, in terms of knightly chivalry with a free intermixture of dragons and magicians, the state of England, Ireland and the Continent in Elizabeth's reign, and the warfare of Protestantism against Rome. But the allegory is obscure and confused, and the wise reader will be entirely content with the sheer beauty of the poetry, without bothering to unravel its political significance. Spenser used a nine-line stanza which, though it had been used before him by Chaucer, has ever since been known as the Spenserian stanza. This is a typical example from near the beginning of the poem:—

Spenser

> "A little lowly Hermitage it was,
> Down in a dale, hard by a forest's side,
> Far from resort of people that did pass
> In travel to and fro; a little wide
> There was an holy chapel edified,
> Wherein the hermit duly wont to say
> His holy things each morn and eventide;
> Thereby a crystal stream did gently play,
> Which from a sacred fountain welled forth alway."

This hermit is, of course, a Romanist, and turns out to be a very powerful magician, who causes endless trouble to the Red Cross Knight, who stands for England, and his lady, Una, who stands for Truth.

Elizabethan drama had a long history of popular art behind it. In one sense we may say that it is the fine flower of the English Renaissance, for the Elizabethan dramatists are eminently prophets of the Renaissance gospel of "worldliness," as described in the second chapter of this Book (see p. 149). But in another sense Elizabethan drama is the culmination of the dramatic art

The drama

[1] It fills two volumes of the *Everyman* series, with about five hundred pages in each.

fostered by the mediaeval Church. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries "Miracle Plays," as they were called, were written for performance at Church festivals. They dramatised, often in a broadly humorous manner, stories from the Scriptures, such as Cain and Abel, or the Shepherds of Bethlehem. There were also "Morality" plays (such as *Everyman*, which has been revived and performed with success in recent years), which presented allegorical characters standing for various virtues and vices, like the characters of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. These dramas enjoyed a local and provincial repute, and we have, for example, York plays,[1] Chester plays, and Coventry plays surviving. Such plays were still performed in the reign of Henry VIII, if not later.

Elizabethan drama was, like Renaissance painting, an art which gradually emancipated itself from the service of the Church. It is generally reckoned that *Ralph Roister Doister* (1550), by Udall, a headmaster of Eton, and *Gorboduc* (1561), by Sackville, afterwards Earl of Dorset, are respectively the first comedy and the first tragedy of Elizabethan drama. But till 1576 there were no theatres in London, and the plays were performed by private companies belonging to the Queen or to noblemen, or by students at the universities. When the theatres began to be built, they proved immensely popular—too popular to please some serious persons. "Woe is me," complains an anonymous writer towards the end of Elizabeth's reign: "the playhouses are pestered, when the churches are naked." No wonder the Puritans closed the theatres when they got the chance, forty years later. These theatres were open to the sun and the rain, being unroofed except over the galleries provided for the wealthier part of the audience; and the scenery was of the barest description, consisting of little more than descriptive placards. The audience were expected to use their imagination, aided by the dramatist. The many

[1] In the York plays, the various scenes are allotted to different craft gilds. The bakers perform the creation and fall of Lucifer; the plasterers the creation of the earth, the shipwrights the building of the Ark, etc.

fascinating descriptions of star-light or of dawn[1] scattered up and down Shakespeare's plays are, in fact, substitutes for the work of the stage carpenter and the stage electrician. It is quite difficult to realise that the many famous "dark" scenes in *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* were played in broad daylight. Again, the quiet endings of the tragedies, in which the bodies of the dead are removed from the stage after appropriate obituary remarks, were made absolutely necessary by the fact that there was no drop-curtain.

The greatest of Shakespeare's predecessors was Christopher Marlowe. He was born in the same year as Shakespeare, 1564, but was killed in a tavern brawl in 1593, very soon after Shakespeare had begun to write. He is the first great master of English blank verse, and his best work is in the closing scenes of his *Doctor Faustus*, the tale of the learned German Renaissance scholar who sold himself to the devil. Nothing more splendid in its own way has ever been written than the famous invocation of the Phantom of Helen of Troy, beginning—

Marlowe

> "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?"

The long frenzied monologue, spoken when Faustus is awaiting at midnight the devils that are to carry him off to Hell, is almost equally fine. But though Marlowe has his great moments of high tragedy, he has little of Shakespeare's marvellous insight into human nature, and none of his ripe humour.

Of Shakespeare's work two-thirds belong to the last twelve years of Elizabeth and one-third to the first eight years of James I. Most of the comedies and all the English histories belong to Elizabeth's reign, as also do *Julius Cæsar* and *Hamlet*. It is unnecessary here to attempt an appreciation of Shakespeare's genius, for every one who reads this book will have read several of his plays. One curious coincidence of dates may be worth mentioning as an illustration of the unique glory of the

Shakespeare

[1] *E.g. Merchant of Venice*, V, i., 54–63, and *Hamlet*, I, i., 166–7.

closing years of Elizabeth. If one were asked to name the two outstanding contributions of the British people to the world, one might do worse than choose our poetry and our system of imperial government. If one were asked to particularise more narrowly one might say, Shakespeare's tragedies and British India. Well, Hamlet was probably written and the East India Company founded in the same year, 1600.

Elizabethan music was as famous in its day as Elizabethan drama, and we are now coming more and more to realise that it deserved its fame. It is principally vocal music, and the Elizabethan madrigals represent the highest perfection of part-writing for unaccompanied voices. The solo songs are almost equally charming, and the instrumental pieces written for "concerts of viols" and for the "virginal" are the forerunners of modern works for string quartet and for pianoforte. England then led the world in music, and Shakespeare, no doubt, appreciated the fact, for his plays are full of songs, and his characters often reveal that they are lovers of the art. The greatest of the musicians were Tallis, Byrd and Orlando Gibbons, and Campion, who set his own words to music in his *Book of Ayres*.

Elizabethan music

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D.	1485.	*Henry VII.*
,,	1487.	Court of Star Chamber Established.
,,	1492.	Columbus's first voyage to America.
,,	1497.	Vasco da Gama reaches India *via* the Cape.
,,	1499.	Execution of Warbeck.
,,	1509.	*Henry VIII.*
,,	1513.	Battles of "The Spurs" and Flodden.
,,	1517.	Luther's challenge to Tetzel.
,,	1527.	The sack of Rome.
,,	1529.	Fall of Wolsey. The Reformation Parliament.
,,	1536.	Dissolution of the smaller monasteries. Calvin settles at Geneva.
,,	1540.	Execution of Cromwell. Foundation of the Jesuits.
,,	1547.	*Edward VI.*
,,	1553.	*Mary.*
,,	1558.	*Elizabeth.*
,,	1559.	Settlement of the Church. Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis.

A.D.	1560.	Treaty of Edinburgh.
,,	1568.	Mary, Queen of Scots, takes refuge in England.
,,	1572.	Rising of the Dutch. Massacre of St. Bartholomew
,,	1584.	Assassination of William of Orange.
,,	1587.	Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots.
,,	1588.	The Spanish Armada.
,,	1598.	Edict of Nantes.
,,	1600.	Foundation of East India Company.
,,	1603.	Death of Elizabeth.

BOOK IV

THE STUART PERIOD (1603–1714)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The outstanding developments of English history in the century that ended with the death of Elizabeth had been along the same lines as the developments in other countries of Western Europe. They may be summed up in such terms as Renaissance, Reformation, development of strong monarchy on the ruins of feudalism, and oceanic trade and adventure. In the next century, the Stuart period, England pursued a course all her own and achieved something entirely without a continental parallel, namely, parliamentary government; for on the Continent strong monarchy became steadily stronger, and culminated in the gorgeous but ruinous despotism of Louis XIV, while in the north-east of Germany the foundations were laid of what was to be the despotic monarchy of Prussia. Spain declined in power, but took no steps towards freedom, and the Dutch Republic, after a period of great brilliance in art, learning and commerce, was ultimately ruined by its struggle with Louis XIV, from which it emerged a mere shadow of its former self. The struggle for mastery between king and parliament in England eclipsed for a time the effectiveness of the government in foreign affairs, but in the end England emerged not only "free" but strong, as was proved by the great victories of Marlborough in the last reign of the period.

The struggle for parliamentary control was closely bound up with the struggle for "puritanism" or thorough protestantism in religion. When the Puritans won their victory over Charles I, they sought to impose their system on the whole country. But this proved as unacceptable as the anti-

puritan tyranny of Charles I, and led to their downfall. The ultimate solution proved to be the exclusion of the Puritans from the Church and their toleration as Dissenters.

In fact the battle of king and parliament had to be fought twice over. The first victory of parliament led to results unforeseen and undesired by the great majority of the combatants on both sides, namely Cromwell's military despotism. The Restoration restored both combatants, king and parliament, and left them to solve their problems afresh under altered conditions, and the result was the establishment of parliament-made kings, who though not kings by hereditary right were at least members of the old royal house. Our period thus falls into two parts of almost equal lengths—1603–1660, James I, Charles I, and the Commonwealth; and 1660–1714, Charles II, James II, the Revolution and its parliament-made monarchs, William and Mary, and Anne. In the first period foreign influences play a very minor part, for all the continental countries were absorbed in the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) and left England to solve her problems free from external interference. In the second period, on the other hand, foreign influence was paramount, for the restored kings looked for support to their cousin, Louis XIV, and the opposition found their deliverer in Louis XIV's great adversary, William of Orange. The Puritan Revolution is a purely local event, important to Europe only in its remote consequences, but the Revolution of 1688 is a great event in European as well as English history. It sealed the fate of Louis XIV's designs for the control of Western Europe.

Our period is also of decisive importance in the relations of "the three kingdoms" of the British Isles. It opens with the union of the English and Scottish crowns, and ends with the union of the English and Scottish parliaments. It was Scotland that set England the example of rebellion against Charles I, and afterwards sought unsuccessfully to deliver him from his English enemies. By the Revolution of 1688 the Kirk emerged victorious from its long warfare with the descendants of Mary Queen of Scots. In Ireland the period

begins with an event of permanent importance, the establishment of the Scottish colony in Ulster. Ireland, apart from Ulster, chose the losing side in the struggle of king and parliament, and when Scotland secured in the upshot a union which made her the partner and the equal of England, Ireland was subjected, as never before, to a crushing tyranny which extends for nearly a hundred years onwards from the decisive battle of the Boyne (1690).

In the sphere of empire building the Stuart period lacks the glamour of romance that surrounds the adventures of the Elizabethan age, but its achievements were far more solid. The East India Company grew to be the greatest trading corporation in the world, and twelve out of the thirteen colonies which afterwards rebelled under George Washington, were founded. These colonies were largely peopled by refugees from the religious intolerance of the home government, but parliament after the Restoration realised their importance as centres of trade, and began the building of that elaborate system of mercantile restrictions which was one of the causes of the American rebellion.

The literature of the age will receive a chapter to itself. It begins with Shakespeare, and it ends with the newspaper, the middle points in this long and strange progress being the two great classics of the Puritan age—*Paradise Lost*, which echoes the cadences of Homer and Virgil, and *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which was, among other things, a forerunner of the novel.

CHAPTER II

DIVINE RIGHT

(i) *James I* (1603–1624)

HISTORIANS have often discussed how far the personal shortcomings of the Stuart kings were responsible for their fate. Certainly James I was ill-fitted to cope with the problems he encountered. Bullied from his youth upward by Scottish nobles and Kirk, he had come to entertain in its extremest form the theory of the Divine Right of Kings. "As to dispute what God may do is blasphemy," he said, "so it is sedition in subjects to dispute what a king may do. I will not be content that my power be disputed on." Holding such views, and holding also a high opinion of his own political sagacity, he took no trouble at all to understand the character and outlook of the people whom, as a foreigner from across the Tweed, he was called upon to rule at the age of thirty-six. Elizabeth had boasted that she was "mere English," and it was the secret of her strength and her success. James was not born English, and he took no pains to become English by adoption. He was incapable of learning wisdom from his critics or prudence from his failures. Henry of Navarre called him "the wisest fool in Christendom"; but James's wisdom expended itself in writing books, such as his *Demonologie*, a treatise on witchcraft, and his *Counterblaste to Tobacco*; he showed no wisdom in dealing with men. In all this he was the very opposite of the great Tudors. He was also their opposite in his complete lack of personal dignity which alone can secure that divinity which should hedge a king. He was ungainly in figure and speech, and grossly immoral. Many kings have been immoral in a manner which has hardly given offence

Character of James I

except to the pious, but the sordid and grovelling indecencies of James's court were such as to earn the contempt of the man of the world.

But all this lay in the future when James made his slow and stately progress from Scotland to London in the spring of 1603. The gentry on the route vied with one another in their lavish hospitality, and none surpassed that of Sir Oliver Cromwell of Hinchinbrook, uncle of the future Protector. There was also business to be attended to. The Puritan clergy presented a so-called Millenary Petition (the name implying, inaccurately, that it was signed by a thousand clergy) asking for the toleration of Puritan practices, such as the disuse of the surplice, within the established Church. In the next year James held a conference on this subject at Hampton Court. The Puritans made some proposal about diocesan synods or assemblies, which reminded James unpleasantly of Scotland, and he burst out, "If you aim at a Scottish Presbytery, it agreeth as well with a monarchy as God with the devil. . . . No bishop, no king. . . . I will make them (*i.e.* you) conform themselves, or else will harry them out of the land." This policy of "harrying" was destined to colonise America, and to bring Charles I to the block; and this alliance of episcopacy and divine right was to provoke an opposition which abolished, for a time, both kings and bishops.

Hampton Court Conference

The Roman Catholics were much more tactful in their method of approach. James was no bigot in religion, except where his own religion of Divine Right was concerned. He was enough of a philosopher to favour toleration, and not enough of a statesman to realise its difficulties. It was the democratic methods of Presbyterianism that he disliked, not its doctrines or its ritual. As for Romanism, he may well have had some slight sentimental regard for the faith in which his mother had lived and died. So the Recusancy[1] Laws, which penalised non-attendance at church, were relaxed. The result was an

Gunpowder Plot

[1] Recusant meant one who refuses (Latin *recuso*) to attend church.

ominous thinning of congregations, and the mystery that always surrounded the numbers of those who still clung in their hearts to the old faith began to take alarming proportions. James changed his mind, accepted the policy of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury and son of Burghley, the minister bequeathed to him by Elizabeth, and re-enforced the Recusancy Laws.

The result was Gunpowder Plot. A small number of Catholic gentry, led by Catesby, hired a cellar under the House of Lords, from which they intended to blow up King, Lords and Commons on the occasion of the King's Speech at the opening of the parliamentary session. Guy Fawkes, a soldier from the English Catholic Legion fighting for Spain in Flanders, was employed on account of his skill in explosive operations. In the confusion that would follow the event there was to be a general Catholic rising, which should place a Catholic on the throne and restore the régime of "Bloody Mary." But Tresham, one of the conspirators, warned his brother-in-law, Monteagle, not to attend the opening of parliament. Monteagle warned the government. Fawkes was arrested in his cellar, and the other conspirators made themselves known by their flight, and were driven to earth in Staffordshire. As a result November 5th became the one great popular national festival of Englishmen.

The parliament which was to have been blown up had been elected in 1604, and sat off and on till 1611. It was in the main, like all the parliaments of the next forty years, an assembly of Puritan squires, with an admixture of lawyers and London merchants, who were themselves in most cases younger sons of county families. These men were anything but radicals, anything but democrats. They were mostly rich, as riches were then accounted; it was remarked that the members of the House of Commons could between them easily buy up the whole House of Lords. But they were genuine "country" gentry, of an age when there was as yet no London season to connect the gentry with Court circles; when public boarding schools had not yet developed as specialised schools for the

The House of Commons

well-to-do. Men like Hampden and Cromwell were educated at modest country Grammar Schools along with the sons of the farmers and tradesmen of their neighbourhood. The great bulk of the members sat for borough constituencies and were the nominees of the middle class. Elections were, more perhaps than at any earlier date when political interest was undeveloped, more too than at any later date before the Reform Bill, genuine expressions of opinion. For the system of buying and selling boroughs did not develop until after parliamentary power had made it worth while. These men had no very elaborate notions of policy, but they were determined to secure what they held to be the purity of the Protestant faith, and to maintain the privileges of parliament. That these were endangered they were well aware. "England," said a member, "is the last monarchy that yet retains her liberties. Let them not perish now!" When James asserted that parliamentary privilege was not of right but of his grace and favour, they gravely replied that he had been "misinformed."

No sensational crisis marked this comparatively long parliament, but it quarrelled with the king about his income, and when James dissolved it, he determined never to summon another if he could help it. In the next year (1612) died Salisbury, the last of the Elizabethan statesmen, and James henceforth gave his ear only to favourites like Carr, Earl of Somerset, and Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who owed their power and their peerages solely to good looks and what passed at Court for charming manners.

Government without Parliament

From 1611 to 1621, there was no parliament except the Addled Parliament of 1614, which was dissolved before it had done anything. The crown at that time enjoyed an income apart from parliamentary grants that, with care, sufficed for most purposes in peace time. There was the rent of crown lands, and the revenue from customs duties, tonnage and poundage, which were always voted to the king for life at his accession. James had added fresh duties to the list, and the judges, by Bate's case (1608), had decided that

these were legal. Still, James was extravagant, and money short. To find money was the main object of the extraordinary expedition of Sir Walter Raleigh in 1617. Raleigh had been the leader of the war party at the end of Elizabeth's reign, and, though he is a hero with posterity, was a generally unpopular character in his own day on account of his overbearing manners. He had been imprisoned for life on an undoubtedly false charge of treason at the beginning of the reign, when James made peace with Spain. Now, at the suggestion perhaps of Buckingham, who showed in later years the gambler's love of a "spirited" foreign policy, he was let loose on the Spanish Main. Of such exploits success is the only justification. Raleigh returned without the gold, and was executed on the old charge of treason, in 1618.

The Spanish Alliance

James now sought Spanish gold by love instead of war. He planned to marry Charles to the Spanish Infanta, who would doubtless bring a good dowry. The ablest and most influential politician at Court was no Englishman, but the Spanish ambassador Gondomar. The Recusancy Laws were relaxed again, and the Popish peril reappeared in a new and subtler form. Meanwhile the terrible Thirty Years' War, described in a later chapter, had begun. James, with an indifference to religious feuds more admirable in a philosopher than a seventeenth-century statesman, had married his daughter Elizabeth to Frederick, Elector Palatine, a German prince of the Rhineland and leader of the Calvinists of Germany. In 1618 Frederick had accepted, from rebels against the Emperor, the crown of Bohemia. This had called down upon him a coalition of Austria (the state actually ruled by the so-called Roman Emperor), Spain, and the German Catholic princes. He had been defeated at the White Mountain, expelled from Bohemia, and was about to be expelled from the Palatinate. James believed that if he prepared for war he could induce Spain to accept the marriage project and to adopt a policy of "hands off the Palatinate." Englishmen would support a war on behalf of the "poor Palsgrave"[1] and their Puritan

[1] The popular Anglicisation of Pfalzgraf, *i.e.* Elector Palatine.

brethren in Germany, though they would certainly not favour James's peculiar scheme of pacification. In these circumstances a new parliament was summoned in 1621.

What had been vague apprehension to the men of 1604 was acute anxiety to the men of 1621. If they failed to secure the parliamentary position, when would parliament meet again? An interval of ten years might be followed by an interval of twenty, or a hundred. They found a leader in Sir Edward Coke, an extremely learned lawyer, who had been deprived of the office of Chief Justice of the King's Bench because he interpreted the law in a sense unfavourable to the king's prerogative, or extra-parliamentary rights. Most of the judges, led by Lord Chancellor Bacon, took the view that *lex* was not *rex*, but *rex* was *lex*. It was due to Coke more than anyone else that the parliamentary claims were based on legal texts from Magna Carta and the Lancastrian parliaments, just as the Puritan claims were based on texts from the Bible. Led by Coke, the House of Commons fell upon the monopolists whom James had enabled to rob the consumer, in accordance with the worst precedent of Elizabeth's reign. Monopolies had been created in wine, soap, tobacco, salt, and gunpowder. These were now abolished. Then, pursuing a feud he had specially at heart, Coke secured the impeachment of his legal rival, Bacon, the Lord Chancellor, for taking bribes, and secured his dismissal with the infliction of a heavy fine.

The Parliament of 1621

This was the first impeachment since 1450, on the eve of the Wars of the Roses. It was the sign that parliament was once again, after the long Tudor interval, aspiring not merely to reject particular royal proposals for legislation, but to control the king's choice of ministers and consequently his policy. But impeachment was an instrument ill adapted to this purpose. It was a strictly judicial proceeding, the Commons prosecuting and the Lords sitting as judges. A definite crime known to the law had to be proved. In Bacon's case this was possible, but as a rule the most undesirable of policies could

Impeachment

hardly be brought under the definition of treason, which was an offence not against the people but against the king. And even if the charge could be proved, there was nothing to prevent the king pursuing the same policy as before, through another minister of the same views as the victim of the impeachment. Parliament was to find that impeachment was an antiquated blunderbuss which more often than not misfired.

The House of Commons then turned to foreign policy and discussed the undesirability of the Spanish match. Here the king intervened, and said that the members had no right to discuss such high mysteries of state. The House thereupon carried a "Protestation" in favour of their right of freedom of speech. James dissolved parliament, and tore the offending Protestation from the records of the House with his own hand. It was, symbolically, a declaration of war. Exactly twenty years later (January 1642) Charles I was to attempt the arrest of his chief parliamentary opponents, and both sides were thereupon to prepare for civil war. Both sides believed themselves to be conservatives defending an ancient constitution, and both found plenty of verbal precedents for all their actions in the varied drama of past history. Yet in truth both were innovators; divine unlimited monarchy and parliamentary government were equally unknown to the Middle Ages in the forms in which Stuart protagonists asserted them.

Freedom of speech

In the next year, 1623, Buckingham persuaded Charles to undertake with him the journey to Madrid, which would achieve the conquest of the Spanish bride. The venture resulted in humiliating failure. Spain had been diplomatically playing at courtship without any intention of matrimony, after the manner of Queen Elizabeth. Charles returned a bachelor, and was a popular hero for the first and last time in his life. Buckingham was determined to avenge his failure by a Spanish war. James, seeing his "castle in Spain" collapse like a house of cards,

The journey to Madrid

surrendered control of policy to his favourite and his son. His reign ended, for all practical purposes, a year before his death. The next four years (1624–1628) were to be Buckingham's.

(ii) *Buckingham and the Foreign Wars* (1624–1629)

Parliament was summoned again in 1624 to prepare for the war, and found itself, for the first and last time in the period between Elizabeth and the Restoration, in general agreement with the government. Both wanted war; but both had the vaguest notions of how the objects of the war were to be secured. The general idea was a naval war with Spain after the Elizabethan style, and the restoration of the Palatinate to its Elector and his English wife, deservedly the most popular member of the Stuart family. But a naval war with Spain, even though successful, would not touch the fringe of the Palatinate problem, which was to be decided by military force in Central Europe. England's military efficiency had departed with the disappearance of the long-bow, and was not to be restored until the parliamentary problem had been solved and England's armies entrusted to the genius of Marlborough. There was no standing army, and the product of the press-gang was more interested in opportunities for desertion than in learning the art of war. The navy had decayed during the long peace.

War with Spain

At the beginning of 1625 "a rabble of raw and poor rascals" were shipped across to the mouth of the Rhine, to be commanded by a ruffianly German mercenary called Mansfeld, and died or deserted without ever reaching the scene of war. A new parliament met, Charles's first parliament, when the failure of the expedition was manifest, and proceeded to refuse all supplies for the war on account of its distrust of Buckingham. It was dissolved, and a naval expedition to Cadiz proved as dismal a failure as the military expedition to the Low Countries. Charles's second parliament (1626) impeached Buckingham, and was dissolved like its predecessor. Under such conditions no war

could succeed, and parliament must bear its share of the blame. When a nation goes to war, it must support its government and trust it with lavish supplies. It would be as easy for an industry to capture a foreign market while its employees were on strike as for a government to win a war whilst its parliament withheld revenue.

Baulked of his Spanish bride, Charles I had, soon after his accession, married Henrietta Maria, the sister of Louis XIII of France. She was, of course, a Catholic, but the French government tolerated its Huguenots, and, as the old rival of Spain, was preparing to support the Protestant cause in the Thirty Years' War. In fact a close alliance of England, France, and Denmark afforded at this time the only chance of restoring the fortunes of the Elector Palatine. But the French marriage, instead of producing a French alliance, produced a French war which, in combination with the Spanish war, reduced our foreign policy to blank absurdity. There was a quarrel as to the rights of the Queen's attendants to have their Catholic services. Also Richelieu, now chief minister in France, was determined to suppress a half feudal, half Huguenot, rebellion in the south of France before entering on war with Spain. In 1627 Buckingham led in person an expedition to seize the Isle de Rhé, near the great Huguenot fortress of Rochelle. He failed, and was setting out to lead another expedition to the same place in 1628, when he was assassinated by a soldier with a grievance, named Felton.

War with France

Charles's third parliament, that of 1628–29, had lost all interest in the war and all hope of relieving the German protestants. Under the leadership of a Cornish gentleman, Sir John Eliot, it returned to the problem of the defence of English liberties. Four grievances called for remedy. The government had raised money for the war by a forced loan; it had imprisoned without trial those who refused to pay it; it had billeted soldiers without leave or payment on the houses of citizens; and it had forced civilians in districts occupied by the troops to submit to trial by courts-martial. These four abuses were declared

The Petition of Right

illegal by the famous Petition of Right, which was accepted by the House of Lords, and presented to the king for ratification together with a somewhat moderate offer of parliamentary taxation. The bribe sufficed, and the Petition became the law of the land.

Parliament then proceeded to deal with the special case of tunnage and poundage.[1] These import duties had been voted to previous kings of the last two hundred years for life, but to Charles they had been voted for one year only, an innovation in which the king was not prepared to acquiesce. Then there was the novel doctrine of Free-will, or Arminianism, which was spreading among the divines favoured by the Court, and this doctrine was a direct contradiction of Calvin's doctrine of Predestination, which was the foundation stone of the Puritan religion. Theology and finance, God and Mammon, are curiously combined in the "Three Resolutions" with which the House of Commons was occupied in March 1629, when the king's officers knocked upon the fastened door of the House to bring the king's announcement of the dissolution of parliament. "Whoever shall by favour seek to extend Popery or Arminianism . . . Whoever shall counsel or advise the levying of tunnage and poundage not being granted by parliament . . . If any merchant shall voluntarily pay the same . . . he shall be reputed a capital enemy to this kingdom and the commonwealth." When the knocking was heard, the Speaker, Finch, made as if he would rise from the chair, though the Resolutions were not yet carried. Holles and Valentine sprang forward to hold him down, while the business was tumultuously completed. Once again a parliament had ended in a symbolical act of war.

The Three Resolutions

Eliot and several others were thrown into prison and kept there without trial, in spite of the Petition of Right, for their conduct in this parliament. Some secured their release by paying fines. Two, one of them Valentine and another Strode, one of the "five members" of a later day, remained

[1] Tunnage was a tax of 2*s*. per tun on imported wines, and Poundage a tax of 3*d*. in the £ on all imports and exports.

in prison for eleven years. Eliot remained in the Tower till his death, in 1632. When he died his family asked for his body that it might be buried in his Cornish home. "Let Sir John Eliot," was the royal answer, "be buried in the church of that parish where he died."

(iii) *Charles I's eleven years without Parliament* (1629–1640)

For the next eleven years (1629–1640) Charles I governed without a parliament.

Politically James and Charles were much alike, but there was a singular contrast between their characters. We all know the face of Charles I in the famous portraits of Vandyck, which have made his personal appearance more familiar than that of any other of our kings except Henry VIII. When we know a man both by his portrait and by his recorded career, we are tempted to think that we can read in the portrait the character which the career reveals. We read, in Charles I's portrait, dignity and refinement but not much intelligence, obstinacy in the pursuit of a chosen aim combined with an endless shiftiness and ambiguity in the choice of means, a martyr by destiny who would bring as much credit on his cause by his bravery as discredit by his incompetence and dishonesty. Such at least was Charles I—every inch a gentleman if gentlemen may tell lies and break promises, every inch a Christian, if Christians may seek to establish a monopoly for their own form of Christian worship. Neither his virtues nor his vices were those of the typical Englishmen of that or any other period. If we would see him at his best, it would be in his picture-gallery. Like so many popes, but so few English kings, he was a generous and enlightened lover of art. He was the patron of Vandyck and Rubens, and purchased for his country the priceless frescoes of the Venetian Mantegna, now at Hampton Court.

Charles I

Two other names are inevitably associated with these eleven unparliamentary years, Wentworth and Laud. Wentworth was a Yorkshire squire who had sat in parliament and co-operated with Eliot and the

Wentworth

Puritans in their opposition to Buckingham. But he was neither a Puritan nor a parliamentarian by conviction. What he wanted was efficient government. He joined the parliamentary attack on Buckingham, not because Buckingham was tyrannical but because he was inefficient. Wentworth's ideal was enlightened despotism, and when, after Buckingham's death, the king offered him employment, he readily accepted it, hoping soon to become Buckingham's successor. His old parliamentary comrades naturally called him a deserter or "apostate," but they were mistaken, for Wentworth's career was perfectly honourable and consistent throughout. During these same years, Richelieu, as the trusted minister of a docile king, was lifting France out of the confusion of religious strife and feudal disorder and creating the despotism that was to make France far the greatest Power in Europe. Might not Wentworth play a part like that of Richelieu in England? But Charles I was not a Louis XIII, and listened to his queen, who disliked this harsh, efficient, outspoken Yorkshireman. Strafford was dismissed to provincial tasks, first as President of the Council of the North,[1] and afterwards as Viceroy of Ireland. Only in 1639 was he brought back to London, made Earl of Strafford, and called upon to deal with a desperate situation that had not been of his making.

Laud was the real chief minister for ten out of the eleven years, and Church questions formed the staple of politics. Elizabeth's government had laid down the law of the Church, and had enforced it as far as seemed politically necessary and expedient. Charles and Laud set themselves to enforce uniformity and what they called "decency" in the externals of worship, regardless of political consequences. Puritan practices were rooted out, and Puritan "lecturers," hired by Puritan congregations to preach sermons more to their taste than those of the holder of the living, were silenced. The process of "harrying them out of the land" begun by James, when three hundred Puritan clergy were ejected after the Hampton Court

Archbishop Laud

[1] Established by Henry VIII, see p. 190.

Conference, was renewed in earnest. About 20,000 Puritans emigrated to America. It would be true to say that Laud did more to establish the English colonies than any of the school of Raleigh. If one of the foundations of our empire is trade, the other is religious bigotry. Laud was immensely energetic and entirely sincere; and there was undoubtedly substance in his argument that unity is impossible without discipline. But while he repressed his enemies he hardly inspired his supporters. He was not a great religious leader. "To him," the historian Gardiner says, "a church was not so much the temple of a living spirit as the palace of an invisible King." His instruments were the Court of Star Chamber and the High Commission Court,[1] the former for lay libellers of the bishops, the latter for Puritan clergy. In 1637, Prynne, a lawyer, Burton, a clergyman, and Bastwick, a physician, had their ears cut off in the pillory for libel, and the popular demonstration on their behalf might have warned a wiser government. But there was no rebellion. England had got beyond the stage of facile rebellions, and had not reached the stage of newspaper and platform agitation. It was to be left for less civilised and long-suffering Scotland to show the way to revolt.

While the Puritans were persecuted, the Roman Catholics, shielded by Henrietta Maria, who was now all-powerful at Court, were in high favour, and Puritans quite wrongly supposed that Laud was secretly working for a Roman reconquest. The Pope made the same mistake, and offered Laud a cardinal's hat.

There can be little doubt that, if Charles had taken Wentworth as his chief minister, a policy of despotism would have been boldly and intelligently pursued and an army raised to support it. But Charles did nothing of the kind, and, even in the sphere of taxation, sought with useless ingenuity to keep within the letter of the law. Obsolete mediaeval taxes were revived. Fines were exacted from landowners who ought, under feudal custom, to have claimed knighthood. Enormous fines

Unparliamentary taxation

[1] See pp. 172 and 208.

were imposed on great landowners who owned and cultivated what had once, under Plantagenet kings, been royal forest land. The ancient royal right of calling upon port towns to provide ships in time of war was transformed into the right to levy ship-money, first on ports and afterwards on the whole country, in time of peace. Hampden, a rich Buckinghamshire squire, refused to pay, and was condemned by a majority of the king's judges in 1637, the year of the punishment of Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick.

In the same year the king and Laud took what proved the fatal step of trying to impose a Prayer Book like the English one upon the Scottish Kirk. Resistance was instant, universal and clamorous, and all classes outside the still Catholic Highlands signed a Covenant for the defence of their religion, and proceeded to arm. Charles met them with an inadequate force hastily gathered from the northern shires in 1639. The First Bishops' War followed. The two armies faced one another just north of the Tweed, but there was no fighting, and the king accepted all the Scots' demands. Then he proceeded to break his promises, and summoned Wentworth, now created Earl of Strafford, to the rescue from Ireland. Strafford, entirely out of touch with the English situation, advised the summoning of a parliament. He believed that the old antipathy between England and Scotland would prove a stronger motive than the common Puritanism of Scottish Kirk and English parliament. His policy was just eighty years out of date.[1] The so-called Short Parliament of April 1640 was dissolved as soon as it showed signs of opposing the king's Scottish policy. Strafford undertook to raise a new army to deal with the Scots, and also to bring over his army from Ireland. But it was too late. The Scots marched to the Tyne and crossed it, defeating a small English force at Newburn. This Second Bishops' War was concluded by a Treaty of Ripon, by which the King undertook to pay the Scots a large indemnity before they left England. Thus the Scots played into the hands of their English friends, for they made

The Scottish rebellion

[1] See p. 210.

it absolutely necessary to summon another parliament. This "Long Parliament," which met in November 1640, differed from all its predecessors in that it had a victorious army behind it. Its first step was to arrest Strafford and to set about his impeachment.

CHAPTER III

THE PURITAN REVOLUTION

(i) *The Parliamentary Rebellion* (1640–1646)

A LITTLE less than two years (November 1640 to August 1642) intervened between the meeting of the Long Parliament and the opening of the Civil War. This period falls into three sections which should be clearly distinguished—the first session of the parliament, the brief recess (or "holiday") in the autumn of 1641, and the second session. In the first session the House of Commons was practically united in destroying the instruments and methods of the king's despotism, and was supported by a majority of the House of Lords. In the second session it was divided, and those who were to become "Roundheads" and rebels defeated those who were to become "Cavaliers" by only a small majority in the Commons, and found themselves reduced to a minority in the House of Lords. When the Long Parliament met, the king had really no party at all. The ministers of his despotism were either imprisoned or fled the country. His future supporters in the civil war were mostly "parliamentarians" who had supported the impeachment of Strafford but declined, for reasons which will appear, to take up arms against the king.

The leader of the Long Parliament and the first great parliamentary statesman in our history was John Pym, a lawyer of county family, who had already introduced the modern practice of electioneering by making a tour of the constituencies, with Hampden the Ship-money hero, urging the electors to choose sound Puritans. His first task was the impeachment of Strafford. Here the weakness of impeachment as a political

Impeachment of Strafford

instrument at once revealed itself. No amount of legal ingenuity could prove that Strafford had committed treason against the king. Pym tried to make out that Strafford, as an enemy of the real welfare of the country, had committed treason against the king as representing the country—against "the Crown" as we should say. This subtle distinction between the personal king and the symbolical king or "Crown" has been the basis of all our later constitutional development,[1] but courts of justice must be guided by the precedents of the past, not by forecasts of the future. When it was plain that Strafford would be acquitted, the more radical members urged that he should be attacked by a Bill of Attainder, which was simply an Act of Parliament ordering that the person mentioned in it should be put to death. Charles played into his enemies hands by a futile "Army Plot," for bringing troops from Yorkshire to overawe the Parliament. When this plot was betrayed to Pym, he reluctantly accepted the policy of Attainder. The Bill passed the Commons and the Lords, and the fierce mob that surged round Whitehall, calling for the blood of "Black Tom the Tyrant" persuaded the king to give his royal assent. So the one man who might, if his master had given him a fair chance, have diverted English history on to the lines followed by the continental nations gave his life for a lost cause. Laud was kept in prison for four years, and then shared his fate.

The rest of the work of the first session can be briefly summarised. All the unparliamentary taxes of the last eleven years were made illegal, the Courts of Star Chamber and High Commission were abolished, a Triennial Act made illegal an interval of more than three years between the meetings of parliament, and another Act declared that parliament could not be dissolved except by its own consent. All the work of this session has proved permanent, in spirit if not in letter. Even the Restoration,

Legislation of 1641

[1] *E.g.* If you ride a bicycle on the pavement and are stopped by a policeman, you will receive a summons bearing the signature of the king.

which undid all that followed, did not undo it. There have been no more Straffords, no more Star Chambers, and though the king dissolves parliament in name, he does so on the advice of his prime minister, who in turn owes his position to his parliamentary majority.

Two events, one small but significant, the other large and decisive, marked the recess. The king paid a visit to Scotland and sought to find friends there. It was rumoured that he plotted to seize Argyle and Hamilton, two great nobles who had been the foremost patrons of the Kirk. Did not this suggest that his assent to the work of the first session of his parliament had been merely a subterfuge to gain time? Then came reports of an Irish rebellion, reports enormously exaggerated, it is true; but the reality was horrible enough. Perhaps eight thousand Protestant settlers were either massacred, or driven from their homes and starved. It was natural that the Irish should rebel. They had only been completely conquered for forty years: they had experienced six years of the iron hand of Strafford, and now they saw him put out of the way, and their English enemies quarrelling among themselves. The real cause of the rebellion was the robbery of Irish land, and its chief centres were Ulster, colonised by the Scots under James I, and Wicklow, colonised by Strafford. But a heated Puritan imagination easily saw in it a vast Popish conspiracy, engineered by the queen if not by the king himself.

The Recess

When parliament met again it rapidly became the battle-ground of the two parties that, under various names, have been with us ever since, Cavalier and Round-head, Tory and Whig, Conservative and Liberal. The Cavaliers found leaders in the lawyer Hyde and the scholar Falkland. Their standpoint was: "We have destroyed the instruments of despotism, and that is enough. England, after all, is a monarchy. We must work for conciliation, and a partnership of king and parliament." The weakness of this policy was that partnership was impossible until it was decided which was the senior partner. Pym

The rise of parties in Parliament

replied in effect: "Can the king be trusted? Events in Scotland prove he cannot. Then there is the Irish question. An army must be raised to put down the rebellion. If we allow the king to raise the army, he will use it first to suppress us. We must, at whatever cost to legality, raise the army ourselves and officer it with our own supporters." In fact, in the upshot, both king and parliament raised armies, which fought each other in England, and the Irish rebellion was left unavenged till the English problem had been temporarily settled by the execution of the king.

But the two parties were also deeply divided on the question of religion. Early in the first session the London citizens had brought in a petition for the "root and branch" abolition of bishops. Decision on this question had been postponed until the work on which the House was agreed had been accomplished; but it could be postponed no longer. The bishops themselves had few supporters, but none of the alternatives to episcopal rule of the Church won general support. Some wanted to subject the Church to lay commissioners appointed by parliament; others wanted the presbyterian system, or rule by mixed lay and clerical assemblies; others wanted the "Independent" or congregational system, whereby each congregation ruled its own affairs in its own way. To many each of these three remedies seemed worse than the disease. Moreover, the extremer Puritans attacked the Prayer Book as well as the bishops, and the Prayer Book had many staunch supporters. So the party of Hyde and Falkland, without ceasing to be Puritan and parliamentary, inasmuch as it was still opposed to the policy of Laud and Strafford, became "Anglican" and supported bishops and Prayer Book against Pym's party, which was clear what it did *not* want, but not at all clear as to what it wanted.

The decisive trial of strength between the parties came on the Grand Remonstrance (November 1641). This was an elaborate historical summary of the king's policy, designed to show that he could not be trusted, and a statement of the Roundhead party programme. Radical Church

reforms were forecasted, and a demand was inserted that the king should choose ministers "such as parliament can confide in"—a forecast of the Cabinet system. The Grand Remonstrance was carried by eleven votes, amid scenes of wild excitement and disorder, in which some laid their hands upon their swords, as if they waited for the word to draw them. "I thought," said an eye-witness, "we had all sat in the valley of the shadow of death; for we, like Joab's and Abner's young men, had catched at each other's locks, and sheathed our swords in each other's bowels." Pym ordered the Remonstrance to be printed. Like a true parliamentary statesmen, he was appealing for support to the public outside the House.

Henceforth the Cavaliers began to leave the House, where they found themselves in a minority. Hyde got into touch with the king, and hoped, by giving the king sound advice, to enable him to win over waverers from the Roundheads and secure a Cavalier majority. But, alas! he found, like Strafford before him, that advising Charles I was a most thankless undertaking. The king listened graciously and seemed to assent, and then went and listened to somebody else, probably the queen. Hyde's policy crashed in ruins when, on January 4, 1642, the king marched down to parliament with four hundred men at arms, entered the House of Commons, and sought to arrest Pym, Hampden, and three other Roundhead members. Charles had none of the kind of wickedness necessary to a successful conspirator. With characteristic lack of guile he had given plain warning of his intentions, and the five members had taken refuge in the City. Six days later the members returned in triumph to Westminster, and Charles left London, never to return except as a prisoner.

Attempted arrest of the Five Members

Throughout the spring and summer both sides were busy preparing for war. But negotiation for peace was not abandoned, and in June parliament sent the king Nineteen Propositions, in which they demanded for parliament control of foreign policy, of army and navy, of Church affairs, and of the appointment of

The Nineteen Propositions

ministers and judges. The king's answer was very much to the point. "These being passed," he replied, "we may be waited on bareheaded, the style of majesty continued to us, and the king's authority declared by the House of Parliament may still be the style of your commands, but as to true and real power we should remain but the outside, but the picture, but the sign of a king." Thus acutely, much more acutely than most of the parliamentarians themselves, did Charles I divine the ultimate destiny of English monarchy in the event of a Roundhead victory.

The war that was now about to begin was remarkably free from the brutal features which mark most civil wars.

Character of the Civil War

It was not a war of classes, for a considerable minority of the gentry supported the parliament and officered its armies. It was not a war for selfish objects; neither side was fighting either to retain or to destroy class privileges. The Cavaliers gave all for loyalty, the Roundheads gave all for their conceptions of liberty and religion. The combatants behaved chivalrously to one another, for they were often old friends;[1] and honourably to non-combatants, for strong partisans of both factions were a minority of the nation, and were anxious to secure the goodwill of the lookers-on. Only Catholics were ill-treated when they fell into the hands of the Roundheads: and the conquest of Ireland after the king's execution was stained by terrible massacres.

There was no clear line of geographical division between the two sides, but on the whole the North and West were for the king, and the South and East for parliament. Parliament enjoyed two priceless advantages from the first —London and the navy, together with nearly all the ports. London had ten times the population (perhaps 300,000) and twenty times the wealth of any other town in the country, and the possession of the ports enabled Pym to control the customs, which were at that date the most important source of revenue. Taxes on imports had the advantage of being

[1] See, for example, the beautiful letter of Sir William Waller to Sir Ralph Hopton. Trevelyan, *England under the Stuarts*, p. 233.

THE WARS OF
KING AND PARLIAMENT
English Miles
0 20 40 60 80 100
Territory supporting the King at the end of 1643
Territory supporting Parliament
Dunbar
Edinburgh
Philiphaugh
Flodden
Newburn
Newcastle
Marston Moor
York
Hull
Drogheda
Preston
Winceby
Naseby
Huntingdon
Holmby House
Cambridge
Wexford
Worcester
Edgehill
Colchester
Gloucester
Oxford
Chalgrove
London
Newbury
Reading
Turnham Green
Lostwithiel
Plymouth
Cribb & Co. del.

paid, indirectly, by all consumers alike, whether Roundhead, Cavalier, or neutral. Pym proved fertile in financial devices, and parliament without the king was soon raising a larger revenue than had ever been raised by the king without parliament.

The command of the parliamentary armies was entrusted to the Earl of Essex, a worthy but slow-witted man who had been the innocent victim, long before, of a most unsavoury divorce-and-murder scandal of the Court of James I, and had since seen some fighting abroad. The armies were pledged, in accordance with Pym's famous distinction between king and crown, to "live and die with the Earl of Essex in defence of the king's majesty and the liberties of parliament." On the king's side there was no recognised commander-in-chief, but the leadership passed to Prince Rupert, a dashing young man of twenty-two, son of the unfortunate Elector Palatine, and consequently a nephew of Charles I.[1] In this war cavalry proved more important than infantry, and infantry than artillery. Rupert's cavalry could charge irresistibly, but could not re-form after the attack. The parliamentary side won in the end mainly because Cromwell trained a cavalry that could charge, re-form, and charge again under orders.

Charles raised his standard at Nottingham in August, 1642, marched to the Welsh border, and then on London, followed by Essex. After an indecisive battle at Edgehill, the king continued his march, but was held up outside the capital, at Turnham Green, by Essex's army reinforced by the London train-bands, and withdrew to Oxford, which henceforth became his head-quarters.

The war in 1642–43

In 1643 the Royalists attempted a triple advance on London,—Newcastle with his largely Catholic army of "Whitecoats" from the North, Hopton from the West, and the king from the centre. All three won victories, but the local feeling in each of these essentially amateur and civilian armies was so strong that they would not march on London so long as parliamentary strongholds were left

[1] And uncle of the future George I.

behind to overawe their own counties. Hull, Plymouth, and Gloucester held out for parliament. The first two were safe, as they could be provisioned from the sea. Gloucester would have fallen had not Essex marched out to its relief with the London train-bands. On his way back he defeated the king's forces at Newbury, where Falkland was killed. Hampden had already lost his life in a skirmish at Chalgrove near Oxford.

Cromwell

While these indecisive events occupied the main theatre of war, a member of parliament who had never seen fighting before the day of Edgehill was fashioning a small army of very different calibre in the counties of the so-called Eastern Association. Cromwell had played only a secondary part in the debates of the Long Parliament, but he had long been a great figure in the local politics of the Fenland. His public spirit and strong democratic sympathies had made him the defender of the poor against the encroachments of the rich landowners, and when he took upon himself to organise the fighting capacity of the eastern shires, his local reputation stood him in good stead. His knowledge of the military art was based on a careful study of the campaigns which the great King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, had conducted ten years before in Germany. The essential features of Cromwell's army were regular pay, firm discipline which extended to moral as well as military offences, religious ardour, religious toleration, promotion by merit, and that *esprit de corps* which unlimited confidence in a great leader inspires.

The Scottish alliance

At the end of 1643 both sides sought and found allies, Charles in Ireland and the parliament in Scotland. In Ireland Strafford's successor, Ormond, made a truce with the rebels and shipped some Catholic Irish troops to fight for the king in England. With Scotland, Pym—it was the last act of his life—concluded a treaty called the Solemn League and Covenant whereby parliament undertook to reform the English Church "in accordance with the example of the best Reformed Churches," in return for which the Scots sent an army into England under

David Leslie. Both the English parties bought their military reinforcement at a heavy price. Charles, by his alliance with Irish rebels, forfeited the support of many English waverers, and parliament entangled themselves in a virtual pledge to establish a Presbyterian system which few even among themselves really wanted.

1644 proved a year of contrasts. In the North, Cromwell's army and the Scots won a decisive victory over Rupert and Newcastle at Marston Moor, but in the South, Essex, after an aimless and meandering campaign in the extreme West, lost all his infantry at Lostwithiel, while he himself ignominiously returned to London by sea. In the latter part of the year Cromwell's victorious forces came down South, and met the king in the second battle of Newbury. But the Earl of Manchester, who was put in command, refused to adopt the tactics which would have secured the decisive defeat of the king's forces.

The war in 1644–45

It was not merely a question of competence *versus* incompetence on the parliamentary side, but of two different attitudes to the war. Manchester, "a sweet meek man," and his like were always looking for a compromise, and peace without decisive victory. After all, the king remained the king. Hardly any of the parliamentarians were as yet republicans. A decisive victory would be almost as embarrassing as a decisive defeat. Cromwell, on the other hand, without being yet a republican, saw that war and politics must not be thus confused. If you have gone to war, your object must be to win, and as quickly as possible.

In the debates of the ensuing spring Cromwell's view carried the day in parliament. By the Self-Denying Ordinance and the New Model Ordinance, all members of both Houses surrendered their commissions. The army was remodelled on the lines of Cromwell's Eastern forces. Fairfax, a dashing soldier who had never taken part in politics, was made commander-in-chief, and Cromwell, though a member of parliament, was appointed his lieutenant-general.

The end now came quickly. The king was decisively

defeated at Naseby in June 1645. The conquest of the West followed. In the summer of 1646 Oxford surrendered, and the king delivered himself up to the Scottish commanders at Newark. His forces were dissipated, his chief councillors had fled the country, and he was a prisoner in the hands of his enemies, but he did not despair. "As a Christian I must tell you," he wrote, "that God will not suffer rebels to prosper, nor his cause to be overthrown, and whatever personal punishment it shall please him to inflict upon me must not make me repine, much less give over this quarrel." Charles and Cromwell had not much in common, but they were alike at least in this, that both counted God as an irresistible ally, and in that faith were prepared to dare to the utmost, the one in action, the other in suffering.

(ii) *The Military Revolution* (1646–1653).

When people go to war, they aim at a political and not merely a military result—to change the mind of their enemy, so that he will accept what before he refused. From that standpoint the parliament's victory was a complete failure. The king still stood where he had stood when he first raised his standard. He believed that monarchy was necessary to England, and that his enemies were rapidly dividing into hostile factions; and on both points he was right.

The great majority of the parliament men were constitutional monarchists, not republicans, yet they failed to see that the only way to attain their ends was a policy of generous conciliation. Instead they confiscated royalist estates, and persecuted Anglican worship. Cromwell was against them on both points. Unlike king or parliament he stood for toleration, except of papists. The presbyterians said that toleration was "the devil's masterpiece." Cromwell thought persecution of any that he accounted Christians not only wicked but absurd, because unworkable; to prove its absurdity he compared it with prohibition of alcoholic drink!

The policy of parliament

Parliament and army

As parliament treated the Cavaliers and Anglicans, so it prepared to treat its own army—to disband it without arrears of pay and to persecute the "Independent" sects to which most of the leading spirits of the army belonged. This produced a threat of mutiny. Cromwell held the army back as long as he could, but in June 1647 he reluctantly put himself at the head of a military revolution, whereby the army leaders took from parliament the power that they had enabled parliament to take from the king. The Scots, failing to convert their royal prisoner, or guest, to Presbyterianism, had in December 1646 handed him over to the commissioners of parliament in return for their arrears of pay. Now, in June 1647, Cornet Joyce, on behalf of the army, went down to Holmby House in Northamptonshire, where the king was lodged, and brought him to the army head-quarters. In August the army, led by Fairfax and Cromwell, entered London. Eleven members of the presbyterian majority were expelled, and parliament was cowed into temporary submission.

Cromwell was quite alive to the serious nature of the step he had taken. "What you have by force," he had said, "I look upon as nothing." But he soon began to convince himself that the step, because inevitable, was predestined, and therefore taken under Divine guidance. "Consider," he urged, "whether this army be not a lawful power called by God." Cromwell was above all things a practical man, who took each step as it came, leaving the future to Providence. "He goes furthest," he once said, "who knows not where he is going." He had begun as champion of "government by the many" against the claims of Divine Right of Kings: henceforth he was champion of "government of the good," as he considered them, against the claims of king and parliament alike. Down to 1649 he was seeking to bring the king round to the side of "the good." When convinced that this was impossible, he consented to his execution. For all the remainder of his life he was seeking to reconcile "the many" to the policy of "the good," but in this too he failed. After his death "the good" were leaderless, and "the many" combined with a new king to effect the Restoration.

Colonel Ireton, the army expert in constitutional matters, drew up what were called "Heads of the Proposals" for a treaty with the king, who was now at Hampton Court. The terms were wise and generous. They included toleration of all Protestant churches, protection of royalists' estates, parliamentary control of policy, and reform of parliamentary constituencies. But all offers were wasted on the king, who would have no terms but his own. He fled to the Isle of Wight (November 1647) and there negotiated a treaty with the Scots for an invasion of England on his behalf. This treaty, sometimes called "the Engagement," doomed the king. Republicanism had already begun to spread among the rank and file. The Levellers, or democrats, led by Colonel John Lilburne, had drawn up proposals, called "the Agreement of the People," for a democratic republic, and were denouncing Cromwell as a traitor because he persisted in negotiation with the king. Now there was talk of "bringing Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to account for the blood he has shed."

The army and the king

The second Civil War (1648) was primarily a Scottish invasion, complicated by minor royalist and presbyterian risings in Wales, Essex, and elsewhere. Colchester held out stubbornly against Fairfax. Cromwell fell upon the Scots at Preston and decisively defeated them. Meanwhile parliament was again negotiating with the king. As soon as the war was over, the army replied by sending Colonel Pride down to Westminster, where he excluded the Presbyterian majority of 135 members. The same body which had strained at the gnat of five members in January 1642 was now forced to swallow the camel indeed. All that remained of the Long Parliament was about ninety members, soon to be nicknamed the Rump, who accepted the policy of the army.

The second Civil War

The first item in that policy was the execution of the king. Charles was brought to trial before a special court of about sixty commissioners, under the presidency of a lawyer named Bradshaw. He refused to recognise that that court or any other had authority to try him; was condemned; and executed on January 30th, 1649.

The king's execution

Charles claimed on the scaffold that popular sympathy was on his side. He was undoubtedly right. When the bleeding head was lifted up, there arose, says an eye-witness, "such a groan as I have never heard before, and desire that I may never hear again." That act of blood doomed the republic on the day of its birth. England would never consent to be ruled by the sword of the Regicides. But it is equally true that England would never have consented to be ruled by the Divine Right of Charles I. Charles was a martyr for monarchy and Church, but his idea of monarchy was despotism and his Church one that claimed to enforce monopoly by persecution. The future lay with parliamentarism and toleration, and both of these had been offered by Cromwell and Ireton eighteen months before, and refused by the king. In politics, said an experienced modern statesman, you have always to be content with the second-best, and are lucky if you can get that. Cromwell certainly found it so: a military Republic had not been his first choice.

The men who had made England a republic had now to conquer all the other territories which had belonged to the Crown. A quarter of the fleet had deserted the cause of the army, and, basing itself on friendly foreign ports, was pillaging the commerce of the republic under the leadership of Prince Rupert. Blake, a good soldier who quickly showed himself a great sailor, chased Rupert into the Mediterranean and then across the Atlantic, recovered the allegiance of Virginia, and proved to continental governments that England was once again a power to be reckoned with. Cromwell was sent to conquer Ireland.

Establishment of Republican authority

Cromwell's ignorance of Irish history was astounding and complete. "Englishmen," he told the Irish, "had good inheritances among you, which they purchased with their money. They lived peaceably and honestly among you. You had equal benefit of the protection of England with them. You broke this union. You, unprovoked, put the English to the most unheard-of and bar-

The conquest of Ireland

barous massacre that the sun ever beheld, and at a time when Ireland was in perfect peace." It was thus with a good conscience that Cromwell fell upon the luckless Irish. The massacres that followed the sieges of Drogheda and Wexford stunned effective resistance. After nine months Cromwell returned to England, and the conquest was completed by Ireton and others. The final settlement was directed by Cromwell from England. What was bad in Cromwell's Irish policy was not new; it was simply the policy of Elizabeth, James I, and Strafford more thoroughly applied. Irish land was given to Protestant landlords and Catholicism was to be suppressed. Cromwell believed that "assiduous preaching together with humanity, good life and honest dealing" would effect this result. What was new in his policy was good. Ireland was to send representatives to the English parliament, and to enjoy free trade with England. The parliamentary representation was valueless since it was limited to Protestants, but free trade was the greatest boon freely offered by an English statesman to Ireland from the days of Strongbow to the days of the younger Pitt. Unhappily the good perished and the bad survived. The Restoration abolished free trade and set about throttling Irish industries; but Cromwell's alien landlords created the Irish land problem, which was not solved till 1903.

The future Charles II, at this date a young man of nineteen, looked to Scotland rather than Ireland as the ladder of his ascent to the English throne. He turned first to the Highland royalists. In the year of Naseby Montrose had won, in his father's cause, a series of brilliant victories, which ended abruptly in the defeat of Philiphaugh, when he ventured into the Lowlands. In 1649 the Kirk suppressed Montrose with greater ease, and executed him as a traitor. Meanwhile Charles turned to the Kirk. He professed himself, dishonestly, a good presbyterian, and the Kirk with equal dishonesty professed to believe him. Cromwell[1] invaded Scotland in 1650. He treated his former

The conquest of Scotland

[1] Fairfax at this time resigned his command and retired into private life.

allies very differently from the Irish. Papists were old enemies, but the Scots were erring brothers. "I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ," he wrote, "think it possible you may be mistaken." The Church of Christ was not to be built with such "untempered mortar" as an alliance with the young king, already notorious for his loose morals. These exhortations falling on deaf ears, Cromwell had to apply the argument that, coming from him, always proved irresistible. The Scots were defeated at Dunbar in 1650, manœuvred into invading England in 1651, and crushed at Worcester, Cromwell's "crowning mercy," as he called it. It was notable that the invaders gained hardly any reinforcements on their march south, whereas thousands offered their support to Cromwell. The ordinary man hated the republican despotism, but he wanted no more civil wars, and was not going to have even his king thrust upon him by the Scots. Yet after the battle was over, the secret royalism of simple folk enabled Charles to make his way from Worcester to Brighton, when he took ship for France. Cromwell's Scottish settlement had the good points without the bad points of his Irish settlement. There was a union of parliaments and free trade, both of which were swept away in 1660. Scotland was ruled by Monk and his English garrison. It was a stern and alien rule, but, like that of William the Conqueror in England, it preserved such orderliness in Scotland as had never been known there before.

Cromwell could have taken the government into his own hands at any time after the king's execution, but as an old parliament man he still clung desperately to the surviving rags and tatters of the old constitution, and accepted the government of the Rump. This handful of parliamentarians, intoxicated by the triumphs of Blake, entered upon a quarrel with the Dutch. In 1651 they carried a Navigation Act forbidding Dutch commerce with the English colonies, and depriving Dutch fishermen of their English market. The war that followed (1652–54) was marked by the gallant and well-contested battles of Blake and Van Tromp.

The first Dutch war

To Cromwell this war was most unwelcome, for he desired a close alliance with the only other Puritan Republic in the world. He was also coming more and more to share the exasperation of his officers against this self-important body which still pretended to represent the people of England, and refused to dissolve itself, and make way for a successor. There was only this much to be said for the Rump's position, that a genuine general election was in fact impossible, for any parliament so elected would at once recall the king, and send both army officers and civilian republicans about their business. Yet if England was to be ruled by the sword it was certainly best, thought the officers, that that rule should be efficient. In January 1653 the thought of forcibly dissolving the Rump, said Cromwell, made his hair stand on end. But the next few months convinced him; and, as always, when once convinced, he acted with resolution. On April 20th, he went down to the House, and after a passionate address to the members, called in soldiers to eject them. In his anger the mace, symbolising parliament's authority, seemed to him "a bauble," an idol of political superstition like the crown itself. But this was not his normal opinion. Cromwell, though a smasher of parliaments, never ceased to believe in, and to long for, parliamentary government. One thing, however, namely freedom of religion for the sects, seemed to him more important still, and with that one thing parliamentary government in any real sense was incompatible in Cromwell's day.

The expulsion of the Rump

(iii) *The Protectorate* (1653–1660)

"Peace," wrote Milton in a sonnet addressed to Cromwell in 1652, "hath victories no less renowned than war." Cromwell knew this as well as Milton, but such victories proved beyond his reach. His army and his navy had still triumphs ahead of them, such that Hyde in exile was to admit that "Cromwell's greatness at home was a mere shadow of his greatness abroad." But the essential victory of peace, the reconciliation of the "people of England" to the rule of the

"people of God," was too hard for him. In other words, he could never summon a free parliament without thereby committing suicide.

"Barebone's Parliament"

Cromwell's first experiment after the expulsion of the Rump was an assembly of a hundred and forty nominees of the Independent congregations. This "Barebone's Parliament," as it was called from the name of one of its members, was full of ambitious ideas both good and bad. Its plans for simplifying the law and producing a code "of the bigness of a pocket-book" were based on ignorance, but it is not easy to laugh at its schemes for the care of lunatics, for the relief of debtors, and for the institution of civil marriage by registration. In all these respects we have but followed its lead. Still, Cromwell found its activities more embarrassing than helpful, and he was relieved when his own friends in the House secured its dissolution.

The Instrument of Government

Next, at the end of 1653, the more worldly party among the officers, headed by General Lambert, came forward with a scheme called the Instrument of Government. The Instrument was a "written" or rigid constitution, such as almost every civilised state in the world, except England, now possesses. The essence of such a constitution is that there are certain "fundamentals" which cannot be altered by the ordinary process of law-making. In the Instrument, these "fundamentals" distributed power between the Protector (as Cromwell was now to be called), the Council of State, and the parliament, and forbade any one of them to encroach on the sphere of the other. The first parliament under the Instrument met in September 1654, and instead of co-operating with the Protector, wasted its time in protesting against the Instrument. A second Parliament met in September 1656 and, after a hundred members had been excluded as unsuitable, proved more friendly, and drew up a proposed revision of the Instrument called the Humble Petition and Advice, which Cromwell accepted, with the exception of a clause which conferred on him the title of king. The Humble Petition increased the

Protector's powers but forbade the exclusion of elected members of parliament. When parliament met again, in January 1658, the expelled hundred, now restored, proceeded to make Cromwell's position impossible. Among their leaders we may note Haslerig, who sixteen years before had been one of the "five members" of 1642, and Ashley Cooper, who as Earl of Shaftesbury was to lead the Whig opposition to Charles II. After fourteen days the Protector dissolved the Parliament, "and," he exclaimed, "God be judge between you and me." Yet these parliaments were in no sense representative, for all royalists were disfranchised. The quarrel of Cromwell and his parliaments was a continuation of the old quarrel between parliament and army, which had begun with the military revolution of 1647.

Cromwell's religious settlement

Cromwell's chief interest in domestic affairs was his religious settlement, which he established during his first months as Protector, in 1654. Opposed alike to the Presbyterians who desired monopoly, and the extremer Independents who wanted to abolish Church Establishment, he erected a curious system whereby the endowments of the Church were distributed among the three chief Puritan religious bodies—Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists—controlled by a body of state inspectors called Triers and Ejectors, who excluded the slack and inefficient, however orthodox their views. At the same time religious bodies outside the pale of Puritanism—Anglicans, and even Roman Catholics—enjoyed as large a measure of unofficial toleration as Cromwell dared to give them. He also extended his protection to the new, strange, and spiritual sect of the Quakers. George Fox, the founder of the Quakers, denounced both Bible-worship and war, whereas Cromwell found God's dispensations in military victories, and went into battle with a text on his lips. But really great men can recognise one another even through the fog of conflicting opinion. "Come again to my house," said Cromwell to Fox with tears in his eyes, "for if thou and I were but an hour a day together, we should be nearer one another."

There were many royalist plots for insurrection or assassination, and an equal number concocted by the more fanatical Puritans, who now regarded Cromwell as a man of Belial or as a "horn" out of the Book of Daniel. In 1655 Cromwell established, though he did not permanently maintain, a system of local despotism under territorial "Major-Generals." Race-meetings were prohibited, because they were centres of royalist intrigue. Superfluous public-houses were abolished, and travelling companies of stage-players suppressed. "Merrie England" found its favourite amusements seriously curtailed, but it also found that, for the first time in history, it could go its ways at night without fear of highwaymen.

The Major-Generals

Nearly all revolutionary governments have proved aggressive, and that of the Puritans was no exception. Cromwell had terminated the Dutch war, but to remain at peace with all one's neighbours seemed simply waste of opportunities when England ruled the waves. There was the cause of Protestantism in Europe, which Cromwell desired to promote after the manner of his great hero, Gustavus Adolphus. Unhappily he came upon the scene twenty years too late. There was at the moment no Protestant–Catholic feud in Europe. Catholic France was fighting Catholic Spain, and Protestant Sweden was on the verge of war with Protestant Denmark and Protestant Brandenberg (soon to be renamed Prussia). But Cromwell had other strings to his bow besides the Protestant cause. There was the English Empire. Cromwell was the first ruler of England to be an Imperialist in the modern sense; in him the party of Sir Walter Raleigh at last "took office."

The Spanish war

In 1655 Cromwell sent an expedition to seize from Spain the great West Indian Island of Hispaniola (now called Hayti). It failed, but occupied Jamaica, and Cromwell took henceforth great interest in the beginnings of this, his one permanent addition to British territory. He even proposed that the New Englanders should migrate thither, an offer happily refused. War with Spain followed, and consequently alliance with France, now ruled by Mazarin for the youthful

Louis XIV. Cromwell secured, as the price of his alliance, the protection of the Protestant Vaudois in the Alpine valleys from persecution by the Duke of Savoy. Blake won a magnificent naval victory at Santa Cruz, off Teneriffe, and Cromwell's soldiers, under Lockhart, contributed to the great victory of France over Spain at the battle of the Dunes, England receiving Dunkirk as her share of the spoils of victory.

Whither was all this leading? Cromwell seemed to be combining the continental policy of Henry V with the Imperial policy of Raleigh and Chatham. The war was proving very expensive, and Cromwell's government contained no expert financier. The Protector's death, in September 1658, interrupted his foreign policy before either its good or its bad results could be fully realised.

Cromwell figures in history as an enemy of both royal despotism and of parliament. Yet the blows he dealt the former proved mortal, while parliament quickly recovered from its wounds. By giving parliament victory over the king at Naseby, Cromwell put an end for ever to the prospects of "Divine Right" in England. When he set up Divine Might in the place of Divine Right, he merely proved more conclusively than ever Strafford had done that parliament was the sheet-anchor of English liberty.

Cromwell's place in history

His system fell with a crash, in the eighteen months that followed his death. His son Richard succeeded him as Protector. The leaders of the army first bullied Richard into resignation and then quarrelled amongst themselves. Monk, wiser than his fellow-soldiers, marched south from Scotland, and declared for a free parliament. The first real general election since 1640 was held in the first months of 1660. The free parliament restored the king, and the king, wiser than the Long Parliament of 1647, promised the army full arrears of pay, and so secured its peaceful disbandment. But Cromwell's championship of "the good" against "the many" had achieved the result he would most of all have desired, the survival of the Inde-

The Restoration

pendent sectaries in such numbers that attempts to persecute them out of existence were foredoomed to failure. Another result of Cromwell's rule was to convince Englishmen of all creeds that standing armies were incompatible with liberty. About Cromwell himself there was only one opinion, and it was expressed by the official decree that his corpse should be removed from its grave in Westminster Abbey, and suspended from a gibbet at Tyburn. For the next two hundred years Cromwell was regarded by Whigs and Tories alike as a hypocrite and a tyrant. It is only the historians of the Victorian age who revealed Cromwell in his true character, as one of the noblest and grandest of Englishmen.

CHAPTER IV

THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR AND THE RISE OF FRANCE (1618–1659)

The Thirty Years' war is almost exactly contemporary with the struggle of king and parliament in England. It began in the year of the execution of Raleigh (1618); it reached its climax in the years when Eliot lay dying in the Tower (1630–32); and it ended in 1648, a few months before the execution of Charles I. The war of France and Spain, which arose out of it, lasted until 1659, a year after the death of Cromwell.

The German problem

The Thirty Years' War, like the Puritan Revolution, arose out of conflicts between ideals of political and religious despotism, and political and religious liberty. None the less the two struggles were utterly unalike, for one single and sufficient reason. England was a genuinely national state. King, parliament, or Protector would either rule the whole of it, or not rule it at all. But Germany was not a national state; it was, and had been ever since the downfall of the Emperor Frederick II,[1] a loose federation of independent feudal princedoms, great and small, owing a merely nominal allegiance to the German king (styled Roman Emperor), who ruled from Vienna over what to-day we call Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, and part of Hungary. When the Reformation came, Germany acquiesced in a solution of the religious problem such as would have been impossible in England. Each petty prince was free to choose between the two creeds and to compel his subjects to conform to his views. As a result Lutheranism prevailed in the North and Catholicism in the South. Such was the

[1] See p. 81.

Treaty of Augsburg (1555). The mere fact that it was a treaty, as between independent princes, and not an Edict or Act, like Elizabeth's settlement four years later, tells its own tale.

In the half-century that followed, the Treaty of Augsburg, like the Elizabethan settlement only much more alarmingly, showed signs of splitting and cracking under the strains that the religious enthusiasms of rival parties placed upon it. First, the great Lutheran states of the North, Saxony and Brandenburg, proceeded to increase their territories by "secularising" and absorbing states that had been ruled by Catholic prince-bishops, contrary to the treaty. Secondly, the Counter Reformation kindled in the breasts of such Catholic princes as Maximilian of Bavaria and Ferdinand, soon to be Emperor Ferdinand II, an ambition to right this wrong, and to carry a warfare of reprisals into the enemy's territory. Thirdly, Calvinism, which was not legalised at all by the treaty, appeared in Southern Germany, and found a champion in the rash and bigoted Elector Palatine who married the daughter of James I. The war began when, in 1618, the Bohemian[1] Protestants deposed Ferdinand, whom they had accepted as king the year before, and elected Frederick of the Palatinate.

Bohemian and Danish periods of the war

In the first four years of the war (1618–1622), Ferdinand, aided by his cousin the King of Spain, and by Catholic princes such as Maximilian of Bavaria, and even for a time by the Lutheran Elector of Saxony, who had no love of Calvinists or rebels, utterly defeated Frederick and the Bohemians. Frederick was driven right out of Bohemia and the Palatinate, and his electorate transferred to Maximilian. Here the war ought to have ended. But Frederick had called to his aid mercenary captains such as Mansfeld, who made their living out of war and plunder, and these were not so easily disposed of. Christian of Denmark, encouraged by England and France, rashly joined the rebels. Ferdinand also gained the support

[1] Bohemia is the western and larger part of Czecho-Slovakia, the Bohemians being a non-German people called Czechs.

of a mercenary captain of real genius in the great adventurer Wallenstein. In the Danish phase of the war (1624–1630) Wallenstein and the other Imperial forces defeated Denmark and overran almost all North Germany, while in England parliament was quarreling with Buckingham, and in France Richelieu was dealing with Huguenot rebellions.

In 1630 Ferdinand had apparently won a complete triumph, but his supporters, like the Presbyterians and Independents after Naseby, were themselves acutely divided. Wallenstein cared nothing for religion; his object was to establish a despotism for his master over Protestant and Catholic princes alike; to unite Germany by means of the sword. The Catholic princes, on the other hand, were ready enough to suppress Calvinism and Lutherism, but were determined to preserve their own political independence of the Emperor. Ferdinand had to choose between his allies, and he chose the princes. Wallenstein was dismissed. At the same time, by a fatal error of bigotry, Ferdinand issued an Edict of Restitution, depriving the Lutheran princes, Saxony and Brandenburg and others, of their secularised bishoprics, and thus adding these hitherto friendly neutrals to the list of his enemies. Immediately afterwards Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden landed in Germany with the finest army in the world, to take up the task that Christian of Denmark had just abandoned.

The Edict of Restitution

Gustavus Adolphus was primarily a great Swedish Imperialist, who aimed at converting the Baltic into a "Swedish lake," by encircling it with Swedish territory. With this end in view he had already fought victorious wars against Denmark, Poland, and Russia. From this standpoint he could not tolerate the establishment of a strong German monarchy, which would make the completion of his Swedish empire as impossible as the strong French monarchy had made the English mediaeval empire in France. But he was also a devout Protestant, and he entered Germany with the impulses of a genuine crusader. His scheme apparently was to establish a sort of federation of German Protestant states, independent

Gustavus Adolphus

of Austria and dependent on Sweden. His brilliant gifts and the orderly conduct of his troops towards civilian populations, so unlike that of all other armies in the Thirty Years' War, made him a hero in Germany even though he was a foreign invader. His brilliant victory of Breitenfeld (or Leipsic) in 1631 gladdened the heart of Eliot in the Tower, but in the next year his career of triumph was cut short by his death at the battle of Lutzen.

By this time all the constructive schemes for solving the German problem had been proved impossible. The policy of Gustavus was ruled out by his death, whereas the victories of Gustavus had made impossible both the imperial despotism policy of Wallenstein, and the Edict of Restitution policy of the extreme Catholic party. The war dragged on for another fourteen years, but it was no longer primarily a German Civil War. Richelieu had long been watching events and influencing them by diplomacy. The great aim of his career from first to last was to make France united at home and powerful abroad. He had destroyed the political power of the Huguenots, while preserving to them their religious liberties; he had quelled the nobility; it remained to destroy the power of Spain, whose territories in the Netherlands and the old Dukedom of Burgundy[1] threatened the vulnerable north-east frontier of France. Spain was the ally of Austria, and war with Spain was equivalent to participation in the Thirty Years' War. Thus in 1635 Richelieu, like Gustavus, entered the war on the "Protestant" side, but to him, unlike Gustavus, the German Protestants were merely contemptible pawns in the great game of French aggrandisement.

Richelieu

So France and Sweden fought against Spain and Austria over the prostrate body of Germany until 1648. The most notable victory was Rocroi, 1643, where the young Prince of Condé defeated the Spaniards by tactics copied from Gustavus Adolphus. For the people of Germany the war

[1] These territories had passed by the marriage of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian of Austria to Charles V, and then to Philip II of Spain and his successors. See p. 158.

was one long agony. The devastation of the country was on an unprecedented scale. Not perhaps for two hundred years did Germany recover from the losses in population and wealth that she suffered in the Thirty Years' War.

The Treaty of Westphalia, 1648, recognised results that had long been inevitable. The imperial power had dwindled to a shadow, and the liberties of princes were consequently secure. Calvinism was recognised as a legitimate religion, and the Lutheran states retained the ecclesiastical estates they had annexed. Territorial toleration and national impotence were the principles of the settlement, and France and Sweden, the real victors in the struggle, took their appropriate rewards. France gained Alsace,[1] and Sweden gained part of Pomerania with the port of Stettin, as well as some territory near the mouth of the Elbe. The only German state that emerged from the struggle stronger than it went in was Brandenburg, which had been ruled for the last eight years of the war by Frederick William, "the Great Elector," who laid the foundations of the Prussian monarchy. But that story must be told in another volume of this History.

The Treaty of Westphalia

France and Spain went on fighting, and France soon found herself temporarily crippled by a feudal rebellion, called "the Fronde," against the rule of Richelieu's successor, the Italian Cardinal Mazarin. However, in 1655 Cromwell's intervention on the side of France tilted the scales decisively in her favour. The Treaty of the Pyrenees, 1659, marked the final end of Spanish power, and the establishment of the ascendancy of France under Louis XIV, who had now come of age and was about to take the control of policy into his own hands.

The Treaty of the Pyrenees

[1] For Lorraine, see p. 160.

CHAPTER V

THE RESTORED MONARCHY

(i) *Charles II* (1660–1685)

The Restoration of 1660 restored not only the king but also parliament and the Church. The chief minister from 1660 to 1667 was Edward Hyde, now Earl of Clarendon, who was still as much an opponent of "divine right" as when, nineteen years before, he had voted with Pym and Hampden for the Attainder of Strafford. He now had an ample opportunity of testing his political creed, the equal partnership of king and parliament. Under his leadership parliament proceeded to take vengeance upon the Puritans. Presbyterians and Independents, so long rivals for mastery, now found themselves companions in misfortune. The Acts of the so-called Clarendon Code expelled two thousand Puritan clergy from the Church, excluded those who would not accept the Church service from town councils (which in those days controlled most parliamentary elections), and forbade dissenting ministers or schoolmasters to pursue their calling within five miles of a town. Such legislation showed that parliament had changed much in its religious policy since the days of Eliot and Pym. Before the Puritan Revolution the great bulk of the squires had been more or less Puritan in feeling and the leaders of the Church were the protégés of the king; but now the fanatics and the Ironsides had taught the squire his lesson. He made up his old quarrel with the parson, and readily undertook to persecute the old Cromwellian trooper who was now, perhaps, the dissenting village grocer. The Church no longer needed to uphold "Divine Right," for it had an alternative patron in parliament.

The Anglican Restoration

Such a Restoration was hardly what Charles II would have preferred. He had no desire to share his authority with parliament, and he had no enthusiasm for the Church of England. At the time of his restoration he was thirty years old, and had spent the last fifteen years in adventurous and penurious exile. He was utterly unlike his father. Charles I had been a model of domestic virtue, but Charles II was frankly and gaily immoral, and behaved abominably to his poor little Portuguese wife, Catherine of Braganza, compelling her to accept his mistresses as her ladies-in-waiting. Charles I had been devoutly religious, and had maintained his "divine right" with a simple-minded obstinacy that took little account of obstacles and how to get round them. Charles II was a thorough man of the world, though he had a secret inclination towards the Roman faith; he wasted no time asserting his divine right, but he wanted to be a despot, like his cousin Louis XIV, and he clearly envisaged the means to that end, namely, money and an army. Yet the Restoration saddled him with a parliament which, though almost tediously "loyal" in its protestations, gave him an inadequate income, and cut off all non-parliamentary sources of extra revenue as Charles I's parliaments had never succeeded in doing; and the first event of his reign had been the disbanding of all but a tiny fraction of Cromwell's admirable army.

Policy of Charles II

Yet, though Charles II hankered after despotism, he loved his ease and pleasures still more, and was determined, as he said, never to go again on his travels. The reign falls into four distinct periods of nearly equal length. In the first (1660–1667), Clarendon ruled England, and Charles was biding his time; in the second (1667–1673), the period of the "Cabal," Charles made his bid for despotism, saw it was impossible, and adroitly drew back before it was too late; in the third (1673–1678), Danby, as chief minister, played a defensive game on the king's behalf; in the fourth (1679–1685), the Whigs, who were the successors of Pym's Roundheads, took the offensive and sought to alter the succession to the throne. Their complete

Divisions of the reign

failure enabled the king to score a kind of victory, though not the victory he had, in the second period, sought.

The second Dutch war

The chief event of Clarendon's Ministry, after the Clarendon Code, was the Dutch war of 1665–1667. Prince Rupert and the Duke of York (afterwards James II) were as keenly interested in promoting naval and commercial adventure as Cromwell had been, and this involved collisions with the Dutch in both American and East Indian waters. As Cromwell had provoked war with Spain by his expedition to the West Indies, so the sailors of the Restoration provoked war with the Dutch by seizing, in 1664, their American colony of New Amsterdam (re-christened New York). There were several gallant and evenly contested battles, but the end was a humiliating disaster. The crews of several ships mutinied from lack of pay, and the Dutch sailed up the Thames, and into the Medway. However, by the Treaty of Breda (1667) England retained New York.

The same years had witnessed the terrible calamities of the Plague and the Fire of London. The Plague was the last[1] and not the worst of a series of epidemics that had devastated England in almost every generation since the Black Death. The Fire was quite unprecedented. It is recalled to-day chiefly because it gave a unique opportunity to the greatest of English architects, Sir Christopher Wren.

The fall of Clarendon

When things go wrong, it is natural to blame the government. Clarendon was responsible neither for the Plague nor the Fire, nor the Dutch in the Medway, but these events hastened his fall. He was too "parliamentary" for the king, and too "royalist" for the parliament, and both were tired of him. To both he was a pompous and tiresome survival of a bygone age. Charles dismissed him; parliament impeached him; and he went once again into exile, where he completed his splendid *History of the Great Rebellion*, the most elaborate and ambitious historical

[1] Why it was the last epidemic of its kind remains a mystery. Historians used to say that the fire destroyed the unhealthy slums in which such epidemics arose; but this is not true. The fire destroyed the business quarters, not the slums of the "East End."

work written in English up to that date. He had been a great benefactor of the Oxford University and its printing press still bears his name.

For the next six years Charles surrendered control of his policy to no chief minister, but kept the strings in his own hands, employing a variety of agents, five of whose names happened to spell the word "Cabal," which means a secret committee. This "Cabal" was in no sense an ancestor of the modern Cabinet, for it did not act as a united body, and was not dependent on parliament. The only feature these men had in common was that none of them was a supporter of the English Church so beloved by Clarendon and by parliament. Clifford and Arlington were Catholics; Buckingham, though the reverse of a Puritan in private life, posed as a patron of the Dissenters; Ashley (afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury), believed in no church, and wanted to tolerate all; Lauderdale was a coarse, brutal man who governed Scotland for Charles II much as Strafford had governed Ireland for Charles I.

The Cabal

The king's policy—we may call it his plot, for it was both secret and criminal—was to make himself a despot by means of the help of his cousin Louis XIV. Louis was ready for a bargain, since without the help of the English navy he could hardly fulfil his design of conquering and annexing the Dutch Republic. Ever since the beginning of the reign, Charles had been friendly with his cousin. He had sold him Dunkirk, and had accepted further subsidies to eke out his inadequate income. In fact Charles II turned to Louis XIV whenever Charles I would have raised an unparliamentary tax. The scheme was that Charles should declare himself a Catholic, and accept the loan of a French army for beating down English resistance; in return, he should join Louis in a war against Holland. These were the terms of the Secret Treaty of Dover (1670), which was known only to the Catholic members of the "Cabal."

The Treaty of Dover and the Test Act

In 1672 the scheme began to be launched. Charles issued a Declaration of Indulgence, suspending all laws against

both Catholics and Dissenters, and, in alliance with France, declared war on Holland. But the immediate outcry convinced him that he was treading the road to disaster and must retrace his steps. Church and parliament were the two most powerful institutions in the country, and he had mortally offended both. Moreover, Englishmen were beginning to see that France was becoming a more dangerous enemy than the Dutch had ever been. Charles himself was half French, and Louis XIV was seen to be a sinister influence "behind the throne," such as Philip of Spain had been in the reign of Mary. In 1673 Charles withdrew the Declaration of Indulgence and accepted a Test Act which excluded from civil or military office all who refused communion in the English Church. In 1674 he agreed to make peace with the Dutch, leaving France to continue the war alone.

The Test Act had removed the two Catholic members of the Cabal, and Shaftesbury, who dreaded Papist conspiracy as much as he desired toleration, left the king and began to organise a parliamentary opposition. Charles entrusted the management of his own party in parliament to the Earl of Danby.

The Cavalier Parliament

This parliament was the same as had been elected amid the frenzy of royalist enthusiasm in 1661. It was known as the Cavalier Parliament, and Charles, knowing he would never get such favourable election results again, had decided to keep it as long as he could. In old days parliaments had been too short; the trouble now was that they seemed likely to go on for ever, or at least until the king's death, which, until quite recent times, automatically brought a parliament's life to an end. Shaftesbury, like most modern leaders of opposition minorities, was working to secure a dissolution, and organising his partisans in the country for the next election. His Green Ribbon Club was the first modern party organisation. Danby, on the other hand, was using every device, proper and improper, to keep a majority; for the royalism of even the Cavalier Parliament had been seriously impaired by the events of 1672. He was the first minister to make systematic

use of those forms of bribery and corruption afterwards associated with the name of Walpole—somewhat unfairly, since all ministers employed the same methods from Danby's day till the accession of the younger Pitt (1673–1783). It seems a sad decline from the honourable traditions of the days of Eliot and Pym, yet this corruption marks the rise of parliamentary power. For we do not even try to bribe those whom we can bully; and bribery came in because the days when parliament could be dissolved and ignored were gone out.

These two parties soon acquired their famous names; Shaftesbury led the Whigs, and Danby the Tories. The word Whig meant a Scottish Covenanting rebel, and the word Tory an Irish Papist rebel. Thus the term "Whig" was meant to imply that the opposition relied on the support of scurvy knaves from Scotland, the term "Tory" was meant to imply that the government relied on the support of scurvy knaves from Ireland. Each name indicated, so to speak, the discreditable ally of the English party in question; and of course it was true that the Roundheads, who were the predecessors of the Whigs, had found an ally in the Scottish Kirk, and the Cavaliers, who were the predecessors of the Tories, had found allies among the Irish Catholics, and both might do the same again.

Whigs and Tories

While parties stood thus, in 1678, an amazing panic swept through England; it was believed that the Papists were planning insurrection and invasion. The stories were mostly lies circulated by a singular scoundrel called Titus Oates; but Oates's career of perjury, which sent many innocent Catholics to the block, would have been impossible but for vague but true rumours as to the royal plot concocted in the Treaty of Dover, and apprehensions (which proved fully justified) as to the dangers involved in the succession of the king's openly Roman Catholic brother, James, Duke of York.

The Popish plot

The Popish panic redoubled Shaftesbury's strength in the constituencies. Luck also favoured his parliamentary tactics. He got hold of a letter written by Danby to Louis

XIV applying for money for the king, and, with this in his hand, succeeded in securing a majority for Danby's impeachment. To save Danby Charles dissolved the Cavalier Parliament in January 1679.

Then followed three short Parliaments in successive years—1679, 1680, 1681. All three had overwhelming Whig majorities in the House of Commons, and the Whig policy was embodied in an Exclusion Bill, to exclude James from the throne, in favour, it was presumed, of Charles's illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth. But in adopting this policy Shaftesbury and his friends made a grave mistake. It was a revolutionary policy, and Englishmen, much as they dreaded a Catholic king, were, after their Cromwellian experiences, even more afraid of revolution. Further, the stories of the Popish plot were lies, and were bound to be generally detected and discredited. In fact the Whigs had linked their fortunes with the career of the blackguard Oates, and deservedly shared in his discredit. Charles had merely to play for time, and he played his part to perfection, assisted by the famous "Trimmer," Halifax, noted for continually changing sides and always being right. When the third of the three short parliaments had met its dissolution[1] the Whig party had lost its popular backing. This parliament had been summoned to the old royalist head-quarters at Oxford, and the Whig grandees, riding out from London with bands of armed retainers, had reminded people unpleasantly of the old civil wars.

The Exclusion Bill

After the Oxford parliament it only remained for the king to punish his enemies and enjoy his triumph. Shaftesbury fled to Holland and died there. Other Whigs descended to assassination and insurrection plots, and two of their leaders, Russell and Sidney, suffered death upon the scaffold. For the last four years of his reign Charles was practically a despot, though a precarious despot,

The King's triumph

[1] The first of these three short parliaments carried the famous Habeas Corpus Act, which made secure the ancient privilege of freedom from imprisonment without legal charge and trial.

without an adequate army or an adequate revenue. With characteristic foresight he employed his energies in destroying, by means of legal trickery, the ancient self-governing bodies of the towns, which controlled most of the parliamentary elections. In place of the old corporations he set his own nominees. Another parliament would be inevitable some day; he would ensure that it was a parliament packed with Tories. But Charles died in the midst of his labours, and the servile parliament was secured not for himself but his successor.

(ii) *James II* (1685–1688)

Charles II had maintained and increased the power of the Crown because, like the great Tudors and unlike his own father and grandfather, he made a careful study of public opinion. Thus he had deftly abandoned his Treaty of Dover policy as soon as he saw it would lead to disaster, but had fought to the bitter end against the Exclusion policy, because he realised that, whatever the House of Commons might say, the general public was coming round to his side. Though at heart a Catholic, he had not confessed his religion till he lay on his death-bed. James, on the other hand, was a thoroughly stupid man, who believed that he could not only secure toleration for Catholics but govern the country with a mainly Catholic ministry. How much further he intended to go, whether his ultimate aim was the extirpation of Protestantism, no one can say; but he ought to have known that the steps he actually took would arouse most desperate apprehensions.

Character and policy of James II

Good fortune favoured him. His parliament proved the most docile parliament of the century, and a foolish rebellion of the old Whig candidate, Monmouth, in the first months of the reign, afforded a pretext for raising the army from 6000 to 30,000 men. After the rebellion had been suppressed, this army was maintained in a camp at Hounslow as though to overawe the Londoners. If James's policy recalled memories

of Queen Mary, his army recalled memories of Cromwell—two of the most unpopular names in English history.

Monmouth's little army of Somerset and Dorset peasants had been defeated at Sedgemoor, and Monmouth was very properly executed. But the vengeance on his simple followers exacted by the brutal soldier, Kirke, was quite unnecessary, and was quickly surpassed by the "Bloody Assize" of Jeffreys, who condemned over three hundred peasants to be hanged. In the same year, 1685, Louis XIV, who had long been interfering with the legal liberties of his Huguenots, repealed the Edict of Nantes,[1] and drove a hundred thousand French Protestants out of France. There was really no connection between the Bloody Assize and the policy of the French King, but Englishmen not unnaturally regarded both events as part of a scheme concocted by the two crowns for the destruction of the Protestant religion.

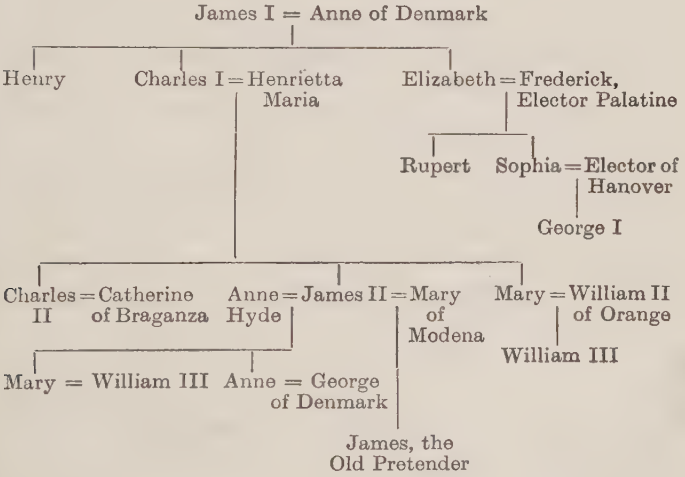
Henceforth James progressed from blunder to blunder. He quarrelled with and prorogued his parliament; established an illegal High Commission Court; appointed Catholics as magistrates and as heads of two Oxford colleges; issued a Declaration of Indulgence, and ordered the Anglican clergy to publish it from their pulpits. When seven bishops protested, he prosecuted them on a charge of seditious libel. They were acquitted, and the cheers of his soldiers at Hounslow should have warned James that, even with an army, all things are not possible.

The invitation to William of Orange

One of the motives that had induced people to put up with much from James rather than face "Exclusion" or revolution was the thought that he was over fifty, and that when he died the crown would pass to his daughter Mary, who had married William of Orange. Mary and Anne were daughters of Anne Hyde, James's first wife, and sound Protestants. Since their mother's death James had married a Catholic lady, Mary of Modena, but the marriage had been childless for so many years that apprehensions of a Catholic heir had died down. Now, however, in the summer of 1688, just at the time of

[1] See p. 218.

the trial of the bishops, the Queen was delivered of a male child, and the prospect of Catholic dynasty extending indefinitely into the future, confronted Englishmen. Thereupon six noblemen drawn from both parties and a bishop signed and sent a letter to William of Orange inviting him to come over with an army.



William of Orange was the great-grandson of that other William of Orange, called the Silent, who had led the Dutch rebellion against Spain, in the reign of Elizabeth. The great-grandson had been playing a similar part in defending his country against France. His father, William II, had died in 1650, a few months before William III's birth, and from that date onwards the government had passed into the control of the great merchants of Amsterdam, led by the brothers De Witt. When, in 1672, Louis XIV made his great military assault upon the Dutch Republic, the mercantile government was overthrown, and young William of Orange called on to save his country. For six years (1672–1678) he had successfully defended his country in war, and had begun to

William III and Louis XIV

gather round him a coalition of all the governments, great and small, that felt themselves threatened by the military ambitions of Louis XIV. Another great war with France was bound to come, and its result would almost certainly depend upon the part played by England. If England supported France, William's coalition would be defeated: if it joined the coalition, even Louis XIV would eventually be compelled to desist from aggression. Thus to William the English Revolution was primarily a European event, a winning over of England from the French to the anti-French side in the great war that was obviously coming. For this reason he was willing to play for high stakes in the notoriously tricky game of English politics.

Yet willing though he was to accept the invitation, he would not have been able to act upon it, had Louis XIV wished to prevent him; he could never leave Holland for England with part of his Dutch army, if there was a likelihood that Louis would reply by declaring war and invading Holland. On this point, however, Louis set William's mind at rest by moving the French army from the Dutch frontier and invading Germany. Perhaps Louis assumed that William was going on a fool's errand and that France would gain by encouraging him in his folly. Perhaps Louis expected William to become involved in a long English civil war, which would keep him out of Europe, and thus clear the ground of France's most formidable adversary.

If this was what Louis XIV thought, he was to find himself greatly mistaken. William with his Dutch army landed at Torbay on November 5th, 1688, and entered London on December 18th. James fled to France on December 23rd, and a "Convention," or emergency parliament, like that which had recalled Charles II, reconciled the conflicting claims of heredity and revolution by proclaiming William and Mary joint sovereigns on February 6th, 1689.

The downfall of James II

The fall of James II had been quite unlike the fall of Charles I. For Charles I, as the champion of the Elizabethan Church against Presbyterians and Sectaries, had had

at least half the country on his side, whereas James II, who sought to upset the Elizabethan Church in the interests of the Church of Bloody Mary and Guy Fawkes, had hardly any supporters at all. Charles I, in fact, had been a Conservative; but James II was a revolutionist, scheming for a revolution that no party, neither Whig nor Tory, regarded with anything but dread. Even the Dissenters, extraordinary as it may seem, shrank from accepting toleration when it was offered as part of a scheme of Popery and despotism. Yet, even so, the downfall of James could hardly have been achieved so easily and painlessly without a good deal of highly skilled treachery in high quarters; and the greatest of the traitors, who pretended allegiance to James until the precise moment when to desert him would ruin him, was John Churchill, the future Duke of Marlborough.

CHAPTER VI

THE PARLIAMENTARY MONARCHY

(i) *The Revolution Settlement* (1689–1707)

The Social Contract

In the Resolution by which the Convention parliament placed William and Mary on the throne it is stated that James had broken "the original contract between king and people," had "abdicated the government, and that the throne is thereby vacant." In these memorable words parliament officially condemned the doctrine of divine hereditary right, and substituted for it an alternative doctrine, called the Social Contract.[1] It was assumed that there was an implied *bargain* between king and people, and that the king was entitled to rule only so long as he observed that bargain. Monarchy, in fact, was to be regarded not as property but as what lawyers call a trust. The bargain was that the king should observe the laws, and parliament was the umpire which decided whether the bargain had been kept. In 1689 parliament decided that the bargain had not been kept, and conferred the throne on William and Mary and their heirs. In 1701, when William was a childless widower, and all his sister-in-law Anne's children had died, an Act of Settlement declared that their lawful successors were the descendants of the daughter of James I who had married the Elector Palatine, namely, Sophia, Electress of Hanover, and her son George. In each case the nearest protestant relation of the old royal family was chosen. The revolution was to be a *minimum* revolution. None the less, henceforth the king owed his throne to Act of Parliament.

[1] The theory of the Social Contract, together with a criticism of Divine Right, was elaborately stated by the Whig philosopher John Locke, in his *Two Treatises of Government*, published immediately after the Revolution.

This change in the position of the Crown was supplemented by a series of Acts of Parliament, which together constitute the Revolution Settlement; and under the same heading may be included the changes in the relations of Scotland and Ireland with England, which belong to the same period and proceeded from the same causes.

The Bill of Rights, 1689, declared that all Catholics were henceforth excluded from the throne, and proceeded to enumerate and declare illegal various actions of the Stuart kings, such as the "suspending" of laws, the "dispensing" with laws (*i.e.* making exceptions to their operations), raising taxes without consent of parliament, or keeping an army without consent of parliament. The problem of the army caused grave anxiety. The Revolution had involved war with France, and an efficient army was as necessary for defence as it appeared dangerous to liberty. Parliament solved this problem in the same year by a Mutiny Act, which entrusted the king with the power of raising forces and ruling them under military discipline for one year only. The Act was to be renewed every year; thus the existence of the army was made dependent on the annual meeting and the good-will of parliament. This curious device still survives, and an Army (Annual) Bill is carried, without debate, every year.

The Bill of Rights

The cause of the Revolution had been religion, and one of the first duties of parliament was to satisfy the claims of the Dissenters, whose refusal to accept toleration as the illegal gift of a Papist had been a decisive factor in the fall of James II. The Toleration Act of 1689 was a very cautious measure. Macaulay describes it as typically English, in that it "removed a great mass of injustice without shocking a great mass of prejudice." It did not recognise the principle of religious equality. It merely allowed freedom of public worship to Protestant Dissenters, except Unitarians, who were regarded as practically atheists. Appointments under the Crown were still reserved to members of the Church of England, but those who liked could secure office by the device of "occasional

The Toleration Act

conformity," *i.e.* attendance at Easter Day communions, while remaining Dissenters in other respects. This practice of "occasional conformity" became a source of annoyance to Churchmen, and Occasional Conformity Bills, to prevent it, were frequently introduced, and one became law during the Tory reaction at the end of Anne's reign, to be repealed on the accession of George I. Actually toleration extended a good deal further than the law, and even against Roman Catholics the old Recusancy laws were henceforth seldom enforced.

Finance

In the sphere of finance a distinction was now clearly drawn between the King's personal income, derived from the royal estates, which was granted for life; the revenue from customs, also granted for life and set apart for the payment of ministers, judges, and officials; and all further expenses, which were to be met from funds specially granted to parliament for the purpose specified. These further expenses, owing to the French war, soon grew so large that Montague, the finance minister, established the National Debt in 1693. Hitherto kings had from time to time borrowed money on their own security, and the rate of interest had been high. Henceforth loans were raised on the security of the government and of parliament, and the payment of interest was the first charge on the national revenue. As a result, the rate of interest fell from 12 per cent. to 8 per cent. In the next year the Bank of England was established to receive deposits from the public and to advance money to the government. The institution of the National Debt had two important results. It supplied, what was then badly needed, a safe investment for the ordinary person. Hitherto almost the only safe investment had been land, and with the growth of trade there was more money looking for safe investment than there was land to be had. It also gave the investing public a financial interest in the stability of the new government. For if "the Pretender" secured the throne, what would he do with the National Debt? He might repudiate it! You couldn't tell, and it was best to run no risks.

A reform little noticed at the time was the abandonment

in 1695 of the censorship of the Press, a fitting prelude to a period in which political journalism, in the hands of such masters as Swift, Addison, and Defoe, exercised perhaps a greater influence on politics than ever before or since.

Throughout the Stuart period judges, holding their office at the king's pleasure, had tended to take a royalist view of those cases, such as Hampden's, which involved questions in dispute between king and parliament. Judges continued to be appointed by the king, but he acted more and more by the advice of his ministers, and in 1701 it was enacted that no judge could be removed except after a petition from both Houses of Parliament. This arrangement proved so effective that it has never been necessary to use it. No judge has ever been thus petitioned against, though a petition against a judge was discussed in the House of Commons in 1906.

The position of judges

The Triennial Act of 1694 limited the life of a parliament to three years,[1] thus making illegal such an abuse of the parliamentary system as the prolongation of the Cavalier Parliament from 1661 to 1679. It now went without question that parliament met every year, which proves the advance made since Pym's Triennial Act of 1641, which enacted that not more than three years should pass without the summoning of a parliament.

The Triennial Act

The reigns of William and Anne were a time of vigorous, factious, and unscrupulous party politics. Whigs and Tories had agreed to make the Revolutions, but their quarrels began again as soon as William was on the throne. The Whigs were the commercial party; they favoured a vigorous foreign and colonial policy; they championed the Dissenters, and were foremost in restricting the powers of the Crown. The Tories represented the old landed classes, and took little interest in the French wars; they were very jealous to maintain the privileges of the Church, and, though they could hardly find a hero in William, who was a Dutchman and a Calvinist, they eagerly attributed

Party politics

[1] Extended to seven years in 1716, and reduced to five years in 1911.

a kind of divine right to Anne, and their clerical supporters enrolled Charles I among the saints and dedicated churches in his honour.

Both William and Anne found it convenient to choose their ministers from the party that had at the moment a majority in the House of Commons—the House of Lords had a small Whig majority all the time—and thus some approach was made towards what we call the Cabinet system. But no Act of Parliament, at this or any future date, defined that system. It was of gradual growth, and at present in its infancy. William acted as his own foreign minister, and Anne's powers were so great (and her mind so feeble) that the welfare of her governments always depended on the goodwill of the Queen's favourite female friend.

Scotland

For the Scottish Kirk the reigns of Charles II and James II had been a time of heavy oppression. The Revolution therefore was eagerly welcomed, and the Scottish parliament adopted measures similar to the English. William re-established the Kirk, on the unwritten condition that it should not persecute other Protestant bodies, and the Scottish parliament, for the first time in its history, became an independent legislative body. Opposition to the Revolution came only from the Highlanders, and this lost all its effectiveness when their leader, Graham of Claverhouse (a kinsman of Charles I's champion, Montrose), was killed in the moment of victory at Killicrankie. The restoration of order in the Highlands was marked, unhappily, by the cruel and treacherous massacre of the Macdonalds of Glencoe.

But the establishment of parliamentary governments both in England and Scotland raised a problem as difficult as any it had solved. The Scots had emerged from a century and a half of religious feuds poor but ambitious. They aimed at establishing colonies of their own—for they were, of course, excluded from all share in the English colonies—and, guided by William Paterson, they established in 1695 a colony at Darien on the Isthmus of Panama. The English

could hardly be expected to like a scheme, the avowed object of which was to levy tolls upon their own merchandise as it crossed the Straits. But Spain also objected to the colony as a poaching upon her immense preserves. The climax came in 1699, when the Scots asked "William King of Scotland" to take action (presumably with the English fleet, for the Scots fleet only amounted to "three small frigates") against the Spaniards, with whom, as King of England, he was most anxious to remain friendly.

The fact was this: two countries under a single crown may each enjoy "home rule," but they cannot each have their own foreign policy.[1] Scotland, in demanding a foreign policy of her own, was in fact demanding independence, and in 1704 she showed her hand by an Act declaring that the House of Hanover should not succeed to the Scottish throne. This England could not possibly allow without a struggle. It would almost inevitably mean that Scotland would become an ally of England's enemy, as in the Middle Ages. There was only one solution, namely, a union of the two countries, involving the combination of their representatives in a single parliament. Such an offer had many attractions for the Scots, for it would mean the opening to Scottish enterprise of the whole area of English colonisation. And, though it was inevitable that the Scots should surrender their parliament, they could be allowed to retain their other national institutions, their presbyterian Kirk, and their legal system, based, unlike the English, on Roman law. At last, after many proposals from England, Scottish pride surrendered, and an Act of Union on these terms was carried through both parliaments in 1707. Henceforth Scots began to penetrate and enrich English life, both at home and in the colonies, but they were long regarded with

[1] The problem of Scotland at this date was much the same as the problem of the self-governing Dominions of the British Empire to-day. Each of them is independent as regards domestic affairs, but Great Britain controls the foreign policy of the whole empire. Suppose, for example, Australia wanted the British Empire to go to war with Japan, when Great Britain was in alliance with Japan. That would be a situation closely parallel to the Darien problem, but not capable of the same solution.

some contempt and derision. Dr. Johnson's untiring gibes against the Scots are typical of the eighteenth century, and perhaps Sir Walter Scott, who began to publish his novels almost exactly a hundred years after the Act of Union, was the first of his race to teach Englishmen to admire the great qualities of the Scottish people.

Cromwell had inflicted on Ireland both a curse and a blessing. The curse was his land settlement, and the blessing his Union, which gave free trade with England. Charles II retained the curse and withdrew the blessing. The Cavalier Parliament began to build up the system of commercial restrictions which throttled export trade from Ireland in the interests of English producers.

Ireland

James II naturally looked for support to the Catholic Irish, and entrusted the government of the country to the Earl of Tyrconnell, "Lying Dick Talbot," who became at once in English eyes a menace combining the horrid qualities of Strafford and Guy Fawkes. Irish Protestants fled to England, and at the Revolution Ireland became, all but Ulster, an independent Catholic country, looking to the deposed James II as its king. It was here that the decisive battle of the Revolution was fought—perhaps we may say the decisive battle of that epoch of European history; for William's victory over James in Ireland enabled him to return to Europe as leader of the great coalition against Louis XIV. James landed in Ireland in March 1689, and Londonderry, the stronghold of Ulster, stood its famous siege till relieved by English ships at the end of July. William, with his Englishmen and Dutchmen, defeated James with his Frenchmen and Irishmen on the Boyne in July 1690, and Limerick, the last stronghold of the Jacobites, surrendered in 1691.

At the surrender of Limerick, William had promised freedom of worship for the Irish Catholics. Unhappily, the Dublin parliament, composed exclusively of Protestants, tore up this "Treaty of Limerick," and proceeded to elaborate a crushingly complete code of petty persecution. Catholics were excluded from every office and every pro-

fession, were forbidden to keep schools, or even to own a horse worth more than £5. At the same time, while the Irish parliament was crushing the Irish religion, the English parliament was continually tightening its stranglehold on Irish trade, to the injury of Protestants and Catholics alike.

At the time of the Scottish Union the Irish Parliament petitioned that it too might be extinguished in order that Ireland might be free from commercial restrictions, and admitted, like Scotland, to membership of the English Empire. But the English merchants were not at all anxious to share their privileges with others. The Scots had been admitted because of their threat that otherwise they would make themselves independent, but the Protestant colony in Ireland could make no such threat, since they were dependent on English support for their supremacy over the Catholics. Thus, their request, unaccompanied by the necessary threat, was disregarded.

(ii) *Louis XIV and the Grand Alliance* (1661–1713)

The Bourbon dynasty had established itself five years before the accession of the Stuarts, when Henry IV, in 1598, ended the French religious wars with the Edict of Nantes. But in 1610 Henry had been assassinated and for a time confusion, feudal and religious, again asserted itself. Then, in 1624, Richelieu became the chief adviser of Louis XIII. A great historian[1] has set side by side two great sieges of 1628, Richelieu besieging Rochelle and Wallenstein besieging Stralsund on the Baltic. Richelieu, by capturing Rochelle but preserving the toleration allowed to the Huguenots, ensured the future development of centralised despotism in France. Wallenstein's failure at Stralsund, and his subsequent dismissal, showed that the same policy was not to prevail in Germany. We have already glanced at the work of Richelieu and Mazarin. When Mazarin died in 1661, two years after the Treaty of the

Louis XIV

[1] Gardiner in *The Thirty Years' War.*

Pyrenees, there was a "restoration" of monarchy in France; once again a king ruled and not a cardinal, and the change was almost as popular as the "restoration" in England, but in other respects it was very different. Charles II was restored to a limited monarchy—how limited he was soon to find out. Louis XIV found himself in possession of the most unfettered authority that any ruler had enjoyed since the days of the greatest Roman Emperors. *L'État—cest moi:* Louis never spoke the famous words, but he would have been quite justified in doing so. In England "Divine Right" was always a heresy; in the France of Louis XIV it became triumphant orthodoxy.

Four great despots, at intervals of a little over a hundred years, have threatened the liberties of all their neighbours in Western Europe—Philip II, Louis XIV, Napoleon, and the Kaiser William II. Louis XIV, though no genius like Napoleon, was a far abler man than Philip II or William II. He combined, what is perhaps unusual, an extreme devotion to the unprecedented pomps and ceremonies of the Court he created at Versailles, with an immense capacity for hard work in the real business of government; and he was admirably served by his ministers. Colbert was one of the most thorough and intelligent of organisers of national trade and industry, while Louvois, the war minister, built up the largest and best equipped standing army that had ever been seen in the world. The French diplomatists were noted as the most intelligent in Europe, and Turenne and Condé were the greatest soldiers of the generation that lies between the death of Cromwell and the rise of Marlborough.

Louis XIV reigned till 1715. He conducted four wars of aggression, each greater than its predecessor. The first was a small affair. In 1667, when England was at war with Holland, Louis sprang a claim to the Spanish Netherlands (roughly, Belgium), and invaded the country. The scheme was nipped in the bud when England and Holland not only made peace but, by a Triple Alliance which included Sweden, forced Louis to

The wars of Louis XIV

abandon the greater part of his prey; but he retained (Treaty of Aix, 1668) eleven fortresses in the Spanish Netherlands, as a jumping-off ground for his next effort.

England was detached from Holland by the Treaty of Dover, and, in 1672, England and France attempted the destruction of the Dutch Republic. An army of 176,000 invaded Holland, but the young William of Orange saved his country by the cutting of the dykes. England withdrew from the war, which lasted six years and ended in a failure for Louis, for, though he compensated himself by annexing Franche Comté (see map, p. 158) from Spain, Holland survived intact.

Then followed ten years of so-called peace (1678–1688), but it was a peace like that of 1904–1914, full of menaces of war. The great despot seized Strassburg and Luxemburg without warning or excuse, defied the Pope in a quarrel about the powers of the Crown over the French Church, and revoked the Edict of Nantes, expelling a hundred thousand Huguenots. Such was the position when Louis XIV reopened the war by invading Germany in 1688, and William of Orange seized the opportunity to come over to England. Spain and most of the German princes were driven by self-defence to join the alliance against France, of which William of Orange was the natural leader, and, when Louis XIV championed the cause of James II as soon as he reached the French Court, England found herself automatically ranged on the same side.

This third war (1688–1697) was dull and indecisive, for William, though adamantine in defence, had little genius for attack. In the first years England was exposed to real danger at sea, for the English navy had been badly neglected in the later years of Charles II, and the French navy vigorously improved. In 1690 the French admiral, Tourville, won a victory at Beachy Head, and for two years dominated the Channel, but was defeated by Admiral Russell at Cape la Hogue in 1692. After this battle the French, progressively exhausted by their military effort, ceased to compete with us at sea. The Treaty of Ryswick, 1697, recognised William

as King of England, but otherwise left the situation very much as it had been before the war.

Meanwhile an appalling problem was about to be presented to the statesmen of Europe. The line of the Spanish Hapsburgs was coming to an end with the death of the invalid Charles II. Spain had entirely ceased to be a first-class Power, but her territories were undiminished, and included Naples and Milan, Sicily and Sardinia, the Spanish Netherlands, and a vast empire in America. To whom was all this to pass? It was no use appealing to the genealogical table, for various Spanish heiresses had "renounced" their Spanish claims on making foreign marriages, and yet—were their renunciations valid, seeing that other items in the treaties of renunciation had never been carried out? "Law," in fact, could not settle the question; it could only be settled by political compromise or by force. There was a French claimant, Philip, grandson of Louis XIV, an Austrian claimant, and a Bavarian claimant. William and Louis worked out schemes of partition between the rival claimants in the two Partition Treaties of 1698 and 1699, but these proved mere waste-paper, for in 1700 Charles II died leaving the whole of his empire to Philip, and Louis accepted it on behalf of his grandson, declaring that "the Pyrenees are no more."

The Spanish Succession

One might expect that a declaration of war immediately followed, and so it would have done if William could have had his way. But his was a limited authority both in England and in Holland, and the English and Dutch peoples were both of them weary of war, and closed their eyes to the consequences of the virtual combination of the French and Spanish empires. A Tory majority controlled the English House of Commons. It had recently dismissed William's Dutch guards and threatened to impeach his ministers, and it now recognised the accession of Philip to the Spanish throne. Then Louis XIV, intoxicated by his easy triumph, committed a series of blunders which played into his enemy's hands. He attacked the Dutch frontier fortresses, proclaimed that France would have precedence of all other

nations in trade with Spanish America, thereby touching the English traders in a very tender spot, and finally, on the death of James II in 1701, proclaimed his son, the "Old Pretender," King of England. William dissolved Parliament, got a war majority in the new House, and declared war.

Immediately afterwards he died as the result of a fall from his horse. William III had never been popular in England. Dry, cold, and stern, he had none of the personal charm which might have made our people forget that he was a foreigner. He was not primarily an English patriot, but a European statesman who used England for his own purpose, rendering her, however, very great services by the way. He was a man of inexhaustible patience and tenacity, and the only wearer of the crown between Elizabeth and Edward VII who can be called a great statesman. Happily he left his work to a successor who was his equal in tenacity and far his superior in military genius. Marlborough became commander-in-chief of the Anglo-Dutch forces, and for the next eight years (1702–1710) controlled the English government through his friendship with the statesman and financier, Godolphin, and his wife's friendship with Queen Anne.

Death of William III

The great war of the Spanish Succession, which filled almost the whole of Anne's reign, was conducted on five "fronts"—the sea, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, and the Upper Danube, which was the meeting-ground of France and Austria, the rival claimants to the Spanish empire.[1] Various German princes supported Austria, among them the future George I, Elector of Hanover, and the Elector of Brandenburg, who was rewarded for his alliance with the title of King of Prussia, and the Austrian armies were commanded by Prince Eugene. The whole Anglo-Dutch-Austrian-German combination was called the Grand Alliance. England played the leading part and became, for the first time since the reign of Henry V, a great power on the Continent, a result not so much due

The War of the Spanish Succession

[1] The Bavarian claimant had died, and the Elector of Bavaria allied himself with France.

to our excellent though small army as to the genius of Marlborough, whose friendship with Eugene enabled him to direct the whole course of the war.

At sea there were no great battles because there was no great adversary, but our navy supported the Spanish war from its two bases at Lisbon and Barcelona, captured Gibraltar and Minorca, and ensured victory to the Austrians in Italy.

In 1704 Louis aimed what was intended to be a decisive blow at Austria. Had it succeeded, its result would have been something like Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz, on the far side of Vienna, in 1805. Marlborough had the greatest difficulty in inducing the timid Dutch government to allow him to parry this blow by transferring the Anglo-Dutch army from the Dutch frontier to the Danube, and in the end he got his way more by trickery than persuasion. The result was the decisive victory of Blenheim, the first crushing defeat of the French since they had established their military superiority at Rocroi (see p. 284), sixty years before. Henceforth France was on the defensive.

In 1706 Marlborough's victory of Ramillies drove the French out of most of the Spanish Netherlands, and Eugene's victory at Turin drove them out of Italy.

On the Spanish front we secured the alliance of Portugal, and this "Peninsular War" assumed something of the same character as that waged by Wellington a hundred years later; but there was this great difference, that the Spanish people in Wellington's day were utterly opposed to Napoleon's brother Joseph, whereas they ardently supported Louis XIV's grandson, except in the north-eastern province of Catalonia, which has always resented rule from Madrid. In 1705 Peterborough, with naval assistance, captured the Catalonian capital of Barcelona, but in 1707 the allies were decisively defeated at Almanza.[1]

Blenheim, Ramillies, Turin, Almanza are the four key-

[1] This is the battle in which the English were commanded by a Huguenot Frenchman, Ruvigny, and the French by a Jacobite Englishman, the Duke of Berwick, illegitimate son of James II.

battles of the war, for Oudenarde merely repeated the result of Ramillies, and Malplaquet was an indecisive battle which proved the difficulty of making the defeat of France a "knock-out blow." France had been driven out of the Netherlands and Italy, but retained Spain; England, by her naval supremacy, had proved her claim to favourable terms of trade with the Spanish colonies. Peace ought to have been made, on the terms indicated by these military results, as early as 1707, and Louis was willing to accept them. But Austria still wanted the whole inheritance for her claimant, and the Whigs, now firmly established in power in England, wanted to prolong the war because they had good reason to expect that the end of the war would mean the end of their own power. Thus the war dragged on most unnecessarily. But in 1710 the Whigs fell. The Tories removed Marlborough from his command, deserted their allies, and made peace at Utrecht in 1713.

By the Treaty of Utrecht Philip retained Spain and the Spanish colonies in America, while the Netherlands and most of the Italian territories in dispute passed to Austria. France lost very little territory, but she was utterly ruined, and never again became a really powerful state until the French Revolution inspired her with new energy. The Dutch were scarcely less exhausted than the French; their commercial and naval supremacy had definitely passed to England. England secured Gibraltar and Minorca, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Hudson's Bay, and commercial privileges reckoned still more important—the monopoly of the slave trade with the Spanish colonies, and the right to send one ship annually laden with manufactured goods to the Spanish markets in Central America. For us, a great continental war had ended in a great imperial treaty. At the end of Anne's reign England was a greater Power than at the death of Queen Elizabeth.

The Treaty of Utrecht

(iii) *The Last Years of Queen Anne* (1710–1714)

Party politics were very bitter in Queen Anne's reign. Politicians scrambled not merely for power but for wealth.

The downfall of the Whigs

To-day the salary of a Cabinet minister is quite modest in comparison with the incòmes earned in business, but in those days business was on a small scale, and the profits, honest and dishonest, of political office were enormous, and the great ministers of state were decidedly the richest men in the country. Marlborough and Godolphin were nominally Tories, but really Coalitionists who aimed at uniting both parties in the conduct of the war. Yet they were gradually driven to rely exclusively on Whig support. Meanwhile Whiggery and all that it stood for were losing ground in the country. Poor Queen Anne, virtuous, harmless, and pathetic, evoked a royalist feeling such as no Stuart who aimed at despotism could kindle, and royalism was one half the creed of Toryism. The other half was devotion to the Church, and Queen Anne, like most of her subjects, disliked the increasing prominence that toleration gave to Dissenters. She was also tired of being bullied by the Duchess of Marlborough. Again, the National Debt had risen to the alarming figure of £40,000,000 in 1709, and the only way to check its rise was to end the war, which meant ending the Whigs.

In 1709 the Whigs sealed their doom by impeaching a clergyman named Dr. Sacheverell, who had preached an anti-Whig sermon. It seemed the height of tyranny to employ against a harmless parson a weapon intended for use against Buckinghams and Straffords, and Englishmen always sympathise with the victims of tyranny. Sacheverell was convicted, but the only sentence passed on him was a disqualification from preaching sermons for three years, and he became a popular martyr. The Queen dismissed the Whig ministry and dissolved parliament,[1] and the con-

[1] These actions of the queen show how much political power the Crown still retained. No sovereign since William IV has dismissed ministers, or dissolved parliament except by a Prime Minister's advice.

stituencies showed their approval by returning a Tory majority.

The main business of the Tory government was to make peace with France. When that was accomplished they were faced with another problem. Anne was dying, and who was to succeed her? Popish James and German George seemed equally undesirable. Englishmen did not want to be ruled by a second-rate foreigner, for they had not overmuch appreciated a first-rate foreigner—William III. Again, George was one of the allies deserted by the authors of the Treaty of Utrecht, and was thus already a friend of the Whigs. Yet the Act of Settlement gave the throne to George, and James was a Papist. The embarrassment of the party was increased by the rivalry between their leaders, Harley and St. John. "Harley," says Macaulay, "was a solemn trifler, St. John a brilliant knave." Harley was inclined to let things drift, but St. John played a bold game, enlisted the support of the Jacobite extremists by an iniquitous Schism Act, forbidding Dissenters to keep schools (thus treating them like the Irish Catholics), and secured the overthrow of Harley on July 27th, 1714. What St. John (or Viscount Bolingbroke, as he had now become) would have done next remains quite uncertain, for five days later the queen died. The law took its course, George I became King of England, the Tories were branded as Jacobites, and the Whigs ruled England and controlled their dummy kings for the next forty years and more.

The succession

CHAPTER VII

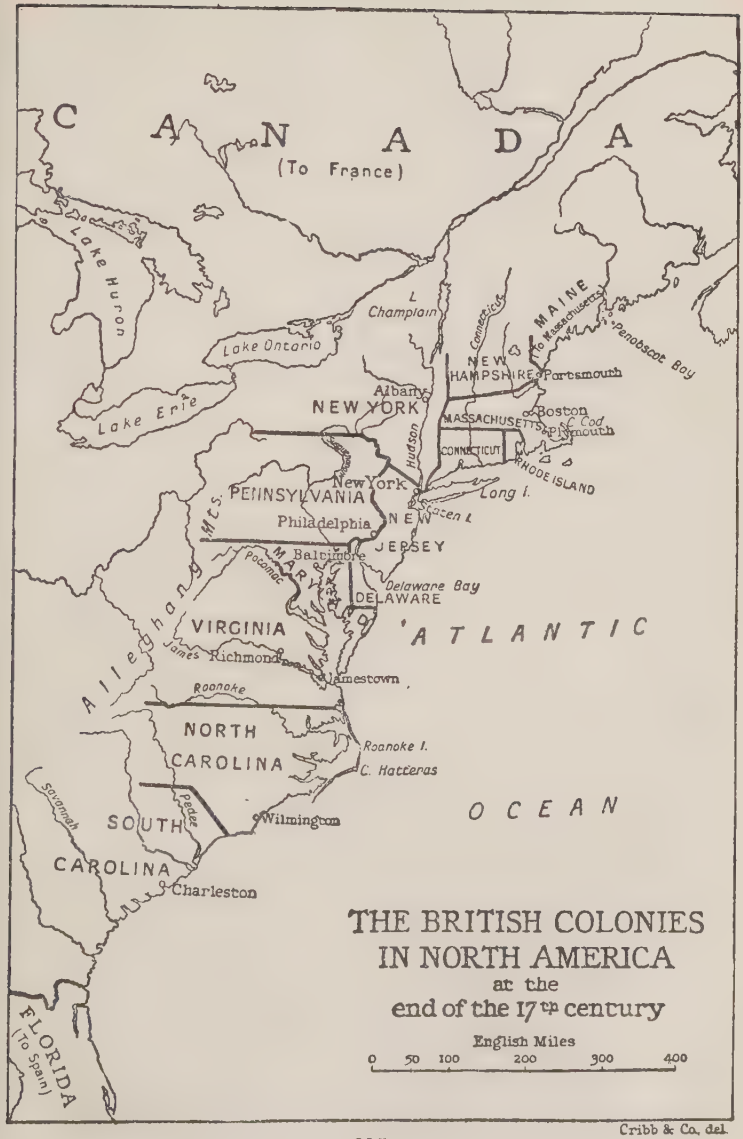
THE GROWTH OF THE EMPIRE

THE reign of Elizabeth contains the forecast of empire, but the Stuart period is the time of its firm foundation. When James I came to the throne England held not an acre of territory in America (for Raleigh's Virginia had perished), and the East India Company had only just been founded. By the date of the Revolution English colonies were scattered along the whole of what is now the east coast of the United States, except Georgia and Florida, and the East India Company was a flourishing concern. It will be convenient to take the American colonies in a geographical rather than a chronological order. They may be divided into the Northern, the Middle, and the Southern colonies.

The Northern Colonies, known collectively as New England, owed their foundation to the Pilgrim Fathers. These were a small group of about a hundred sectaries from Gainsborough and neighbouring villages, on the borders of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, who, after a sojourn of some twelve years in Holland, sailed to the New World in the *Mayflower* in 1620, and founded New Plymouth. About half their number died of the rigours of the first winter, but reinforcements arrived in increasing numbers during the next twenty years. In 1629 Charles I granted them a liberal charter, for he was very willing to encourage an emigration which both relieved England of some of the sterner Puritans, and also created colonies whose exports, taxed on arrival, in England, increased his scanty revenues.

The American Colonies

In the course of the century New England divided into the five colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island. The whole society was


CANADA
(To France)
Lake Huron
Lake Ontario
Lake Erie
L. Champlain
Connecticut
MAINE
to Massachusetts
Penobscot Bay
NEW HAMPSHIRE
Portsmouth
Albany
NEW YORK
Hudson
Boston
MASSACHUSETTS
Cape Cod
Plymouth
CONNECTICUT
RHODE ISLAND
New York
Long I.
Staten I.
PENNSYLVANIA
NEW JERSEY
Philadelphia
Baltimore
Potomac
MARYLAND
Delaware Bay
DELAWARE
Alleghany Mts.
VIRGINIA
ATLANTIC
James
Richmond
Jamestown
Roanoke
NORTH CAROLINA
Roanoke I.
C. Hatteras
Savannah
Pedee
SOUTH CAROLINA
Wilmington
Charleston
OCEAN
FLORIDA
(To Spain)
THE BRITISH COLONIES
IN NORTH AMERICA
at the
end of the 17th century
English Miles
0 50 100 200 300 400
Cribb & Co. del.

based upon the Puritan religion, and the laws enforced a stern morality. Blasphemy and breach of the Sabbath were serious crimes; there were no theatres, no cards, and no dice. The colonists came into unfriendly contact with the Red Indians, and smote them hip and thigh, as Joshua of old smote the Canaanites in the Promised Land. Nor had the colonist any objection to making slaves of Indians, for slavery "came in the Bible" and therefore could not be wrong. Government was controlled by governors and assemblies, both elected by the colonists. Education was made compulsory—a vast improvement on anything that could be found in Europe at that date—and the famous university of Harvard, outside Boston, the capital of Massachusetts, was founded as early as 1636.

The Middle Colonies were New York, New Jersey, and Delaware, annexed from Holland in 1664, and Pennsylvania, founded by the Quaker, William Penn, in 1681. Penn put in practice in his colony the admirable Christian principles of the Quaker sect. There was toleration for all forms of Christianity, a humane criminal law, and a generous treatment of the Indians. In all this Penn's colony set a splendid example not only to the other colonies but, in the first two respects, to the mother country also. The population of these middle colonies was very mixed. There were the Dutch in New York; many persecuted Scottish Covenanters settled in New Jersey, and many Germans in Pennsylvania.

Virginia, the greatest of the Southern Colonies, was re-established on a permanent basis by John Smith in 1608. Here the colonists were not middle-class religious refugees, as in New England and Pennsylvania, but adventurous gentlemen, whose chief difficulty was to find servants. One resource was to send over shiploads of convicts from England; another was to import negroes from Africa. The governor was usually a nobleman appointed in England. The religion was Church of England. In all respects it was a colony utterly unlike New England, and not least so in the matter of education. "I thank God there are no free schools and no printing press," said a Governor in 1670. Maryland

was founded in 1633 for Roman Catholics, but men of other religions were tolerated, and after the Revolution the religion of the founders was itself made illegal. The two Carolinas were founded in Charles II's reign. North Carolina received many settlers from the Huguenots of France, and South Carolina from the Presbyterians of Ulster, who were being ruined by the commercial restrictions imposed upon Ireland after the Restoration.

The colonies owed little or nothing to the home government, but, once they were established, the home government expected much from them. The proper purpose of a colony, according to the universal opinion of those days, was to supply raw materials for the mother country, and to receive the products of the mother country's industries. The raw materials particularly desired were timber for ship-building, tobacco, and cotton. These products of the colonies were to come to England alone, and in English ships. Similarly, all goods going from Europe to the English colonies must first be landed in England, and carried across the Atlantic in English ships. In fact, from the Restoration onwards there was built up an elaborate system of commerce regulation, which grew more and more burdensome to the colonies until the time of their rebellion under George Washington. The restrictions would have been intolerable had they not been mitigated by smuggling.

After the Revolution the home government began to tighten its control over colonial affairs, and elective governors were replaced by governors appointed in London.

The East India Company established its first "factory" or permanent depot at Surat, about a hundred miles north of Bombay, in 1612. Madras followed in 1620, the depot which ultimately became Calcutta in 1642, and Bombay, which was part of the dowry of Charles II's Portuguese queen, was handed over to the Company in 1668. These were the points from which British dominion was ultimately to spread all over India. But as yet there was no thought of such things; the Company was strictly a trading concern, not a department of government,

The East India Company

and consistently discouraged annexation of territory when suggested by its more adventurous servants, for annexations meant items of account on the wrong side of the balance sheet. In early years the interest of the Company centred on the Spice Islands of the East Indies. Pepper was an extraordinarily important commodity in the seventeenth century, for it was the favourite seasoning of kept meat, and fresh meat was only obtainable in the summer months, animals being killed off in the autumn on account of the prohibitive cost of winter feeding. It was the Dutch who, by driving us out of the East Indies, killing our traders in the massacre of Amboyna, 1623, forced us to concentrate our attention on India.

Akbar, the greatest of the Mongolian Mohammedan dynasty known as the Great Moguls, was a contemporary of Elizabeth, and throughout the seventeenth century his successors dominated India. The last of the great Moguls, Aurangzeb (1658–1707), was contemporary with Louis XIV, and in many ways presents an Oriental parallel with him. Like Louis he abandoned his predecessors' policy of toleration; he persecuted Hindus and tried to subject provinces, hitherto more or less independent, to a crushing despotism. The result, from 1680 onwards, was a rebellion of the Hindu Mahrattas, which ruined the empire of the Moguls, and reduced India to a chaos which only ended with the establishment of our own authority more than a hundred years later.

The Dutch wars of the Commonwealth and Charles II were in large part wars for East Indian trade, and Louis XIV's attacks on the Dutch, while they threatened our security at home, played into our hands in India, for the embarrassments of the Dutch made our opportunities. Between 1653 and 1685 the annual value of the imports of the East India Company rose from £8000 to £300,000.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIETY AND LITERATURE

(i) *Society* [1]

If we are to form a clear notion of the elements of English society in the Stuart period, we must begin by realising that the distinction between town and country life was far sharper than at present; or, rather, the sharp distinction that now applies only to the conditions of the poor, then applied to rich and poor alike. There were two reasons for this. First, the extraordinary badness of the roads discouraged travel except when dictated by sheer necessity. Secondly, town life, as we understand it, was practically confined to London. The whole population of England and Wales rose during the period from about four to about six millions. In this population London enjoyed a vast and increasing preponderance, rising from about a quarter of a million to over half a million. The total population of England was less than half that of France or Spain, but London, in Anne's reign, was perhaps already the largest city in Europe. It was, of course, small compared with the London of to-day, but to-day there is a town population in Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, etc. which in combination equals or surpasses that of London. In Stuart times the town population outside London was absolutely insignificant. Bristol, the port of the west, and Norwich, the centre of the woollen industry, had each about 30,000; but no other town had as much as 10,000.

Town and country

[1] There are two admirable descriptions of seventeenth-century society by modern historians. Macaulay's "State of England in 1685" forms Chapter III of his *History* (it is also published in a cheap form by itself), and his great-nephew, Mr. G. M. Trevelyan, devotes the first two chapters of his *England under the Stuarts* to English society at the beginning of the period.

The country gentleman of those days was a genuine countryman. His speech was the local dialect of his humble neighbours. He consumed unlimited beer, for neither tea nor coffee yet formed part of his bill of fare. Yet it would be a mistake to think of him as a mere boor. He was the leader in his own society, and he had the dignity which belongs to leadership; for dignity is not necessarily a matter of refinement. He was an officer of the local militia and a Justice of the Peace. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of this last office in training the political instincts of the upper classes. The J.P. or unpaid local magistrate was a mediaeval institution, which had been developed by the Tudors as a counterpoise to the authority of the feudal nobility. Many a country gentleman learnt as a J.P. that obstinate respect for law which he was afterwards to express as an M.P. in opposition to the claims of "Divine Right."

The country gentleman

With the growth of parliament and the institution of annual parliamentary sessions, the country gentleman became better acquainted with London life, and acquired many of the characteristics of a Londoner. This change involved both loss and gain. The genuine countrymen who had cheered Sir John Eliot, when the Speaker was held down in his chair, had less polish but more character than their grandsons who struggled for place and power in the days of Dr. Sacheverell.

The English squires were a ruling class, but they were never, like the French *noblesse*, a "caste" rigidly separated from the rest of the nation. There was no important distinction, except a seat in the House of Lords, between the titled noblemen and the untitled gentlemen, and the younger sons of both went into trade or professional life, and, both by occupation and by ties of marriage, connected the gentry with the middle classes. Most of the squire M.P.'s sat in parliament not as county members representing their own class but as borough members chosen by the tradesfolk of the little country towns, who had themselves no ambition for a parliamentary career. Squire and tradesman, as we

have already said, had been educated together at the local school, and country sports were still shared by all alike. Only towards the end of the period did hunting and shooting (or its equivalent, hawking) become sports artificially preserved, by Game Laws, for the rich.

Next in rank to the squires, and forming a link between them and the tenants and labourers were the yeoman families, small farmers owning and working upon their own lands. There were 160,000 yeomen families in Anne's reign, and they constituted the bulk of the electorate in the county constituencies. Their disappearance in the eighteenth century was a loss which we have found it easier to deplore than to repair.

The position of the clergy was lower in the seventeenth century than it had been in the Middle Ages, and lower also than it is to-day. The Reformation had affected the position of the clergy in two ways; it had largely destroyed "the divinity that doth hedge" a priest, and it had transferred from clergy to laity the chief positions in the government of the state. Consequently able and ambitious young men of the type of Wolsey were now seldom found among the clergy. Again, the endowments of the Church were much smaller in the seventeenth century than to-day. Many parish clergy could not afford a house of their own, but lodged with the local squire, and ranked among his servants. The comedies of the age show us maid-servants accepting the hand of the parson only when they have been worsted in their pursuit of the butler.

The clergy

The accessions both of James I and Charles II were marked, as we have seen, by expulsions of Puritan clergy from the Church of England. The bulk of the clergy in the latter part of our period were strong Tories and upholders of the privileges of Church and throne—disciples, in fact, of Charles I. But the bishops appointed after the Revolution were men of a very different type—Whigs, scholars, moderate men, "Latitudinarians" as they were called, who exalted reasonableness and despised enthusiasm, a word always used in a bad sense at that time. These bishops

supported toleration, and were hated by most of their own clergy.

London came to include a tenth of the population of the country at the end of the Stuart period, but its influence on politics was out of all proportion to its population, great though that was. The merchants of the City and the lawyers of the Temple were the most actively political bodies in the country, and the squires who formed the majority in parliament accepted many points of policy from these worldly-wise persons, who entertained them with lavish hospitality during parliamentary sessions. When it was a matter of legislation, lawyers naturally took the lead; and when it was a matter of foreign policy, the merchants naturally took the lead. The Dutch and Spanish wars of the Commonwealth and Charles II were purely mercantile wars, and the French wars after the Revolution were largely so. The support of London gave first to the Roundheads and afterwards to the Whigs an efficiency based on concentration rather than numbers. The Whigs were sometimes called the Country Party in Charles II's reign, but it was the country as opposed to the court, not the country as opposed to the town.

London

Yet if we could visit seventeenth-century London we should find it a mean city of concentrated slums. Milton in an often quoted simile [1] speaks of the "houses thick and sewers" that "annoy the air," but immediately adds the suggestion that one can escape them,

> "Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
> Among the pleasant villages and farms
> Adjoined."

The modern Londoner suffers less, but he less easily escapes. Sanitary organisation in the modern sense simply did not exist. The lighting of streets at night only began in the last year of Charles II, and that by private enterprise and on a most modest scale. In the unlighted or dimly lighted streets crime and rowdyism flourished; not only the rowdyism of

[1] *Paradise Lost*, Book IX, 445–451.

the slums but, less excusably, the rowdyism of the "young bloods" of noble birth, who under a variety of fancy names such as "Hectors" and "Mohawks," amused themselves by molesting peaceful citizens. Milton had his word about these also (*Paradise Lost*, Book I, 497–502). But London was not without its opportunities of reasonable social life. The favourite social centre from the Restoration onwards was the Coffee House. Here men met, sipped the new popular beverage, smoked their pipes, and discussed politics, literature, trade, or scandal to their hearts' content. There were Coffee Houses for dandies, wearing the latest wigs from Paris; Coffee Houses for literary men, where people discussed the rules of drama and tried to catch the eye of the great John Dryden; Coffee Houses for Puritans, where there was much theology and no swearing; and even Coffee Houses where, "as good Protestants believed, Jesuits planned over their cups another great fire, and cast silver bullets to shoot the king."[1]

It is difficult to resist the impression that, on the whole, English society was nobler and better in the first than in the second half of the Stuart period. Hampden and Falkland, Charles I and Cromwell stand on a higher moral plane than Shaftesbury and Danby, Charles II and Marlborough. But we must beware of judging the moral level of society in general by the moral level of the Court and politics. Charles I was virtuous and Charles II vicious, but it may be doubted whether, over England as a whole, more men said their prayers under Charles I than Charles II, or more men kept mistresses under Charles II than Charles I. Many Puritan habits, such as family prayers and Bible reading, persisted and continued to spread after Puritanism, as a political power, had been overthrown. Again, the growth of what is called "rationalism," the appeal to reason rather than to tradition as the arbiter of conduct, was not without its compensations; for tradition, even when

Moral progress

[1] The last sentence is a quotation and the previous sentences a very inadequate précis of the inimitable account of the Coffee Houses in Chapter III of Macaulay's *History of England*.

sanctified by the authority of religion, is a dangerous guide. It was reason, not religion, that brought toleration. Puritanism, with its vivid sense of the reality of hell, had stimulated belief in witchcraft and encouraged the appalling cruelties of the witch hunt and witch trial. James I was an ardent persecutor of witches, and even so great a man as Bacon agreed with him. The persecution of witches reached its height under the Long Parliament; it was abated by Cromwell, who combined with ardent piety so many of the common-sense virtues of the rationalist; its decay continued with the Restoration period, and the last trial for witchcraft took place shortly after the death of Queen Anne.

(ii) *Literature*

Great names abound in the English literature of the seventeenth century. The aim of the few pages that follow is to send their readers to libraries where they should have a look into some of the great books of the past for themselves.

Prose and poetry

The first half of the Stuart period is often accounted the golden age of English prose. It was a stately, slow-moving, and elaborate prose, with many picturesque and poetic touches, suited to an age when books were few and readers leisurely. As we approach the end of our period the prose writers cultivate a different and more "modern" style. Their aim is, above all things, to be clear and business-like, to make their points without undue waste of words. There is also a parallel change in the character of the poetry. In the early Stuart period we find so many styles of poetry that no description would cover them all, but after the Restoration a single style more and more predominates, a style aiming at neatness, polish, and wit, concerning itself with the surface of life rather than with deep, romantic emotions. We may say that in the earlier period even the prose has many of the qualities of poetry, and that in the later period even the poetry has many of the qualities of prose.

The Authorised Version of the Bible, issued in 1611, is generally called the greatest monument of early seventeenth-

century prose. But it is hardly typical of the age, for its style is greatly influenced by that of earlier translations, particularly Tyndale's, which belongs to the reign of Henry VIII.

Prose writers

One of the greatest masters of the early style of prose is Sir Thomas Browne, a learned and deeply religious physician of Norwich. His little book called *Urn Burial* is a meditation upon death, fame, and immortality, full of curious learning and elaborate eloquence. Another work of the period that still remains a favourite with modern readers is *The Anatomy of Melancholy* by an Oxford don, Robert Burton. The work was written as a scientific study; if you suffered from melancholy, you could consult Burton's pages to see what kind of melancholy you suffered from, and what was the cure for it. It is read to-day for the quaintness of its many anecdotes and the oddity of its prescriptions.

These were men remote from the busy practical world. Milton's prose works bring us into the centres of history, for when the Puritan Revolution began Milton abandoned poetry for a time and threw himself into political controversy. His *Areopagitica* (1643) is a pamphlet written to protest against the action of the Long Parliament in reviving the censorship of the Press, which had lapsed with the abolition of the Court of Star Chamber. It is the noblest plea for liberty in the English language. Leave truth and error, he says, to fight out their battle in the open; only so can the victory of truth be assured. "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be fought for not without dust and heat." Another famous passage gives one an idea of the radiant confidence in which the Puritans entered on their task. "Now once again, by all concurrence of signs and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his Church. . . . What does he then, but reveal

himself to his servants, and, as his manner is, first to his Englishmen? . . . Behold now this vast city;[1] a city of refuge, the mansion house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection; this shop of war hath not more hammers and anvils working, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions wherewith to present, as with their homage and fealty, the approaching Reformation."

But, alas! all these high hopes of the rule of the Puritan saints in England were doomed to end in utter ruin, and so, some years after the Restoration, another Puritan of genius produced a book in which the Christian seeks not to convert, but to escape from, the city of Destruction. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) is a wonderful book. It is the greatest allegory in all literature. It was one of the first of "best-sellers," for it sold 100,000 copies in its first ten years. In a very real sense it is the first popular novel, and no writer except Shakespeare and Dickens has contributed so much to our common stock of popular phrases—*e.g.* the Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, Giant Despair, the Valley of Humiliation. Bunyan shows us life as a great adventure, and that is the right way to show it.

I group together three great books that belong to the middle of our period, though they have, it must be confessed, nothing in common. Of Clarendon's *History of the Great Rebellion* something has already been said. During the time of the Commonwealth Thomas Hobbes published his great treatise called *Leviathan*, an ingenious defence of despotism in Church and State. Hobbes justifies despotism by a curious perversion of the Social Contract theory. In the beginning, he says, everyone had liberty, and the result was anarchy, and "the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." The only way out was for everyone to surrender their liberty except the sovereign, who consequently was a despot. Hobbes was accused of being an

[1] London, of course.

atheist, and perhaps he was. Certainly no one ever used quotations from the Bible with such devilish ingenuity for proving what the Bible was never intended to prove. The third of this oddly assorted group is Pepys' *Diary*. Samuel Pepys was an industrious and excellent official at the Admiralty under Charles II, and for nine years he kept a diary in a shorthand of his own invention, which was not deciphered till early in the nineteenth century. In this diary he tells the story of his life with such candour and minuteness that we can know him as we know no human being that ever lived except ourselves.

The greatest literary invention of Stuart times was the newspaper. Newspapers of a sort can be traced back as far as 1625, but they were allowed very little scope until the abolition of the Court of Star Chamber in 1641. From that date onwards their history is one of continuous, though chequered, progress. Private ventures are constantly suppressed, and governments alternate between a policy of running an official newspaper or discouraging newspapers altogether. The first daily newspaper appeared at the beginning of Queen Anne's reign, and the same reign saw for the first time journalists who were also distinguished literary men—Defoe, Steele, and Addison.

Defoe was a very prolific writer with a wide range of interests—a journalist, a pampheteer, a dabbler in spiritualism, and one of the founders of the novel. His *Robinson Crusoe* belongs to the early years of George I. He has the art of relating fictions with such a mass of matter-of-fact detail that they might easily pass for truth. In 1702 he wrote a pamphlet called *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, in which he parodied the arguments of the anti-tolerationists so gravely that many of them welcomed his burlesque under the delusion that it was meant to be serious. When they discovered their mistake, they had him put in the pillory and afterwards imprisoned.

Addison and Steele, in their famous thrice-a-week periodicals, *The Tatler* (1709–1711) and *The Spectator* (1711–1712), were the founders of the modern light con-

versational essay. They introduce imaginary characters, worthy old Sir Roger de Coverley being the best known of these, and their aim is "to temper wit with morality and morality with wit." Addison, in fact, was a serious moralist who aimed at raising the tone of society, but he realised that his best policy was to disguise his seriousness and to offer the pill well sugared.

A much greater, though less amiable, writer was Jonathan Swift, afterwards Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin. He was a friend of Harley and St. John, and his pamphlet *The Conduct of the Allies* (1711) is a blasting exposure of the policy of the Whigs in the latter part of the War of the Spanish Succession. His *Gulliver's Travels* belongs to the reign of George I. This amazing book delights the young with its fantastic adventures, and horrifies their elders with the black hatred and contempt for human nature that it reveals. It is a terrible book, just because it is a serious and sincere book, and it is one of the masterpieces of English prose.

The theatre

When James I came to the throne "Elizabethan" drama was far from following Elizabeth to the grave. Shakespeare was at the height of his powers. *Macbeth* contains an unnecessary little scene alluding to James I's practice of "curing" victims of skin disease with his "divine" touch. The last sovereign to effect these cures was Queen Anne—no one would want to be touched by George I—and one of her patients was the infant Samuel Johnson; but he was not cured. Elizabethan drama continued with increasing violence and decreasing value till the Long Parliament closed the theatres. Among its better products outside Shakespeare are the tragedies of Webster and the comedies of Ben Jonson. After the Restoration play-going revived. There were no more great tragedies, but the comedies of Congreve and others are witty, though improper.

Poetry

The number of charming minor poets of the seventeenth century is very large. It is only necessary to mention Herrick and Lovelace, and invite the reader to turn to his *Golden Treasury*, or whatever antho-

logy he possesses. There is also Marvell, whose Ode on Cromwell is best remembered for its famous lines on the heroic death of Charles I, which may or may not have been what the poet intended. There are also some writers of exquisite religious poetry, two of the best, Crashaw and Vaughan, being Roman Catholics. We call these poets "minor" because their work is on a small scale; but what they wrote is often quite perfect within its own limits.

Milton is an austere and lonely genius standing by himself. He is classed as a Puritan, but he is even more an "antique Roman." His first poem of importance, the *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, hardly strikes us as a religious poem, but as an elaborate and exquisite embroidery upon the simple Christmas theme. This and his other lyric pieces belong to the years before 1640. Then he abandoned poetry for politics. His big works, *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*, belong to the time of his old age and blindness, after the Restoration. *Paradise Lost* is an epic on the Garden of Eden story in the style of Virgil and Homer. It sounds formidable, but it is really easy reading, and can be enjoyed by many who find much poetry rather vague and unsubstantial. *Samson* is a tragedy in the style of Æschylus.

The great poet of the last part of the seventeenth century is John Dryden. He was a wonderful craftsman in verse who devoted his best talents to topics of the day. He wrote political poems, and, as he was himself, apparently, quite indifferent to political causes, he supports whatever cause supplies him with a subject. In 1659 he writes a eulogium on Cromwell; in 1660 a congratulatory ode on the coronation of Charles II. His best poem is *Absalom and Achitophel*, an attack on the Whig policy of Exclusion, in which Absalom is Monmouth, Achitophel Shaftesbury, and King David Charles II. The character of Shaftesbury is often quoted:

> "For close designs and crooked counsels fit,
> Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,
> A daring pilot in extremity,
> Pleased with the danger when the waves were high," etc.

Under James II he became a Roman Catholic, and supported his cause in *The Hind and the Panther*. His successor was Alexander Pope, the neatest, wittiest, and least romantic of all great poets. He satirises bad poets in *The Dunciad*, popularises a very shallow philosophy in *The Essay on Man*, and translates Homer; of which translation the great scholar of the day, Bentley, said, "A very pretty poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it Homer." People sometimes have asked, is Pope's work poetry, or only verse?—the answer depends on your definition of poetry. Nearly all Pope's work lies beyond the end of our period.

Three of the very greatest names of the epoch of the Revolution belong neither to literature nor to politics.

Purcell, Wren, Newton

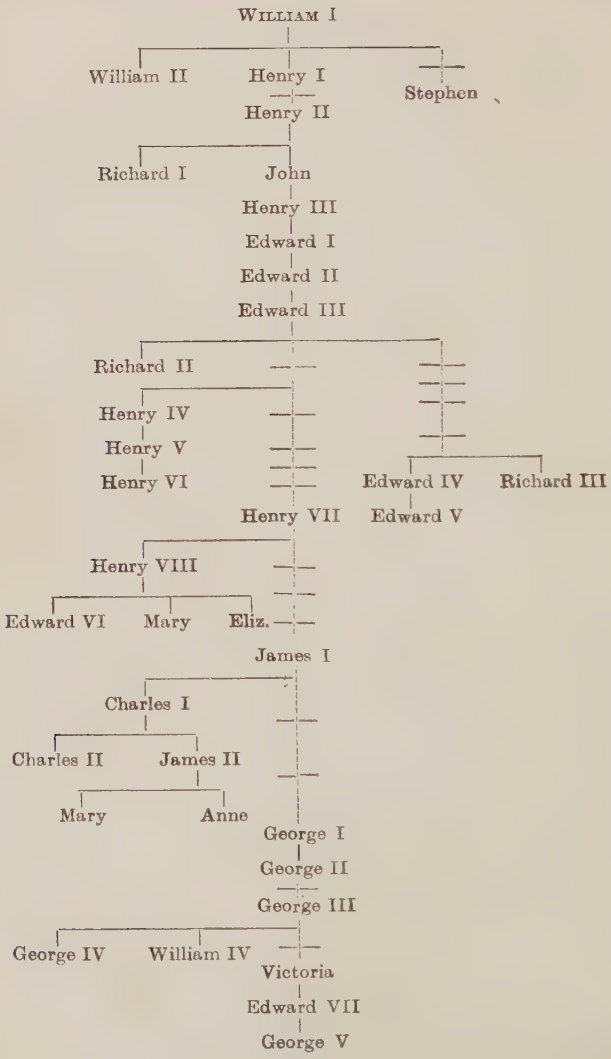
Purcell, who died in 1695, is generally accounted the greatest of English musicians. He was certainly the last great English musician until quite recent times; for in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries we fell under the spell of the great Germans, particularly of Handel (who lived long in England) and Mendelssohn, and our own composers followed very humbly in their wake. As for Sir Christopher Wren, one only need walk down the Strand or visit St. Paul's to realise what England owes to him. The debt we owe to Sir Isaac Newton is perhaps less easily realised by plain folk, but we may believe what we are told, that he was one of the very greatest mathematical scientists that the world has seen. Newton's long life seems to connect two very distant epochs, for he was born in the year of Edgehill, and died in the year of George II's accession. His legendary apple dropped (if it dropped at all) in 1666, the year of the Plague; and under William III he accepted the office of Master of the Mint.

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D.	1603.	JAMES I.
,,	1604.	Hampton Court Conference.
,,	1605.	Gunpowder plot.
,,	1618.	Execution of Raleigh, and beginning of Thirty Years' War.
,,	1621.	Impeachment of Bacon.
,,	1624.	War with Spain (till 1630).
,,	1625.	CHARLES I.
,,	1628.	The Petition of Right.
,,	1632.	The Battle of Lutzen.
,,	1637.	Hampden refuses to pay ship-money.
,,	1638.	The Scottish Covenant.
,,	1640.	The Long Parliament meets.
,,	1642.	The Civil War begins.
,,	1645.	The Battle of Naseby.
,,	1648.	Treaty of Westphalia.
,,	1649.	COMMONWEALTH.
,,	1653.	Expulsion of the Rump: Establishment of the Protectorate.
,,	1658.	Death of Cromwell.
,,	1659.	Treaty of the Pyrenees.
,,	1660.	CHARLES II.
,,	1667.	Fall of Clarendon.
,,	1670.	Treaty of Dover.
,,	1673.	Test Act.
,,	1678.	The Popish plot.
,,	1681.	Dissolution of the Oxford parliament
,,	1685.	JAMES II.
,,	1685.	Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Rebellion of Monmouth.
,,	1689.	WILLIAM III AND MARY.
,,	1690.	The Battle of the Boyne.
,,	1692.	The Battle of Cape La Hogue.
,,	1700.	Death of Charles II of Spain.
,,	1701.	Death of James II.
,,	1702.	ANNE.
,,	1704.	The Battle of Blenheim.
,,	1707.	The Union of England and Scotland.
,,	1710.	The impeachment of Sacheverell.
,,	1713.	The Treaty of Utrecht.
,,	1714.	Death of Queen Anne.

APPENDIX

TABLE SHOWING THE LINEAL DESCENT OF GEORGE V



BOOK V

BRITISH HISTORY (1714–1815)

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  (i) Government and People
  (ii) Politics and Wars

II. Pitt and the Seven Years' War (1754–1763)

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IV. India

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  (i) Scotland
  (ii) Ireland

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Principal Dates

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST FORTY YEARS (1714–1754)

(i) *Government and People*

In the course of the Stuart period King and parliament, like the lion and the unicorn, had fought for the crown, and parliament had won. The final engagement proved the most decisive of all. The Whigs, it has been said, made a hole in the English Constitution and stopped it up with German rubbish. George I (1714–1727) was an elderly German prince, who occupied the throne in virtue of the fact that he was descended from James I and was not a Roman Catholic. Appreciation of foreigners has never been a strong point with English people, and the London mob openly jeered at their new king and his fat German womenfolk. George I greatly preferred Hanover to England, and can we blame him? George II (1727–1760) was less purely German and less personally unattractive than his father, and he exercised, as we shall see, a certain influence for a brief period of his reign on the course of English policy. In general terms, however, we may say that throughout the reigns of the first two Georges the "crown" belonged to parliament. But what, at this stage of its history, was parliament?

German Kings

We must recapitulate something of what was said in the last Book about Whigs and Tories. The strife of Whigs and Tories had grown up round the question how much power was to be allowed to the king. Neither party ever defined its position on this fundamental subject very clearly. The Whigs had never boldly propounded the absolute exclusion of the king from all interference with politics, nor did the Tories desire that parliament should be a mere agent of the royal will. Still, on each point as it arose the Whigs (who continued the tradition of the Roundheads)

Whigs and Tories

sought to restrict royal power, and the Tories (who continued the tradition of the Cavaliers) opposed them. Two other questions also divided Whigs from Tories—questions of religion and of trade. The Tories were the Church of England party and sought to maintain its privileged position, whereas the Whigs championed the claims of Dissenters not only to freedom of worship but also to admission to all offices under the Crown. The Whigs again championed the interests of the overseas traders, and pursued a foreign policy calculated to promote their ambitions, whereas the Tories took less interest in such matters.

We may sum this up as follows. The main elements in the Whig party were—(i) the great landowning nobles, who intended to succeed the king as the masters of parliament, and, through parliament, of the country. In order to secure their power they were prepared to come to terms with (ii) the merchants, and to pursue a mercantile policy, and with (iii) the Dissenters, and to maintain a system of wide toleration. The Tories, on the other hand, were the party of the country squires and the country parsons. It is likely enough that Toryism rather than Whiggism represented the outlook of the majority of those English people who took any interest in politics. But the Whigs had every other advantage on their side. Their natural leaders were a small body of very wealthy noblemen, who could co-operate much more effectively than the large body of country squires. Secondly, they were emphatically the London party. London was the home of the mercantile interest; it contained nearly a tenth of the population of the country, and was twenty times as large as Bristol or Norwich.[1]

During the reigns of William and Anne Whigs and Tories had each had a fair share of power, but the Hanoverian Succession was a decisive victory for the Whigs, and they maintained their ascendancy for over forty years. The Tory leaders were driven from the country, and though Boling-

[1] We may roughly estimate the population, in 1700, of England and Wales as 6,000,000. London as 600,000, Bristol and Norwich as 30,000 each.

broke, the most brilliant of the Tories, was allowed to return in 1723, the jealousy of the Whigs excluded him from the House of Lords for all the remainder of his long life. The Tories were branded as Jacobites, or supporters of the claims of the "Pretender," and the Pretender was a Papist. It was true that, in Queen Anne's reign, many of the Tories (and of the Whigs too for that matter), when faced with the choice of evils personified in Papist James and German George, had hesitated between them. Most of the Tories, and certainly Bolingbroke himself after his return to England, were prepared to give loyal support to the new dynasty. Yet, said one of the Whig leaders, "parties like snakes are moved by their tails." It is doubtful whether the Jacobite tail could have waggled the Tory dog, but it was obviously sound Whig policy to encourage the notion that it could.

Thus the Whigs secured a somewhat accidental ascendancy, and they maintained it with extraordinary pertinacity. Ever since the Restoration it had been becoming plainer that little or nothing could be done in defiance of parliament. Those, therefore, who could no longer defy it set themselves to control it. Charles II had begun the system of securing supporters in the House of Commons by means of places at court, and gratuities or bribes. George I surrendered the whole of this system of patronage to his Whig ministers, and they enormously extended it. Out of a House of 550 members, 271 are known to have accepted places or pensions in the first parliament of George I, and of the remainder a considerable number would be Tory squires who, though elected, scarcely ever attended the proceedings of the House, where they were always outvoted. There was also another entirely distinct system of corruption. Most of the constituencies were very small, for even in fair-sized towns the franchise was often limited to the mayor and corporation. Thus it was easy for great landlords to secure control of elections if they were prepared to devote time and money to the purpose. There were great Whig lords who nominated a dozen or more members apiece. Finally, in addition to the "place" system and the "rotten

The Whig Ascendancy

borough" system, a considerable number of members were nominated by the majority of the House of Commons itself. A government candidate who had been defeated could often find some legal "irregularity" in the proceedings of his successful rival. He could then "petition" against his rival's election, and the petition was heard and voted upon by the whole House of Commons, who made no pretence of deciding the case on its legal merits.[1]

Such was parliament in the heyday of the Whigs. If the old Puritan champions of parliament could have risen from their graves in the days of Walpole, they would perhaps have been somewhat disappointed with the results of the victory of their cause. They had, according to their lights, served God: Walpole's generation undoubtedly served Mammon. It was a system that could only have been tolerated in an ignoble age, when the enthusiasms of the Stuart period were outworn, and the great causes and ideals of modern times had not yet kindled the minds of men.

These forty years were on the whole a very quiet time in our history. Their political and military events will be chronicled in the next section. We have here to deal with certain aspects of the general life of the people. Of these one of the most important may be termed the alcoholic revolution. To be exact there were two alcoholic revolutions; the aristocracy took to port, and the populace to gin.

The alcoholic revolution

Portugal had proved a useful ally in the War of the Spanish Succession, and in her interest the Methuen Treaty of 1703 lowered the duty on Portuguese wines, which thus eclipsed in popularity the comparatively harmless light wines of France. Judged by any modern standard the great majority of eighteenth-century statesmen, from Walpole to the younger Pitt, were drunkards. Of Pitt it is recorded that he only once appeared drunk in the House, but his consumption of port wine was enormous. With port came gout, and the medical profession did little or nothing either

[1] Such petitions to-day are tried by the judges, who allow no political bias to affect their decisions.

to discourage the former or to abate the latter; they seem to have cherished a pathetic faith that more alcohol would mitigate the evil it had already caused. But the aristocracy suffered far less from port than the populace from gin. Hitherto the popular drink had been beer. The quantity consumed was enormous, but its quality was fairly harmless. But during the French wars of William III the government, in order to discourage importation of French brandy, threw open the distillery trade to all English people on payment of a small and easily evaded duty. The gin mania seems to have caught London somewhat suddenly in 1724, and in 1742 seven million gallons were distilled, which is one gallon for every man, woman and child of the population. "Drunk for a penny, dead drunk for twopence, clean straw for nothing," was the alluring advertisement of innumerable drinking dens. The effect on the health and the conduct of the people may easily be imagined. Only in 1751, when the consumption had risen to eleven million gallons, did the government take measures to check the evil.

Popular frenzies

The picture of eighteenth-century England impressed on our mind by the more familiar parts of its literature is that of an urbane and polished society, dancing quadrilles in wigs and silk stockings. There was such a society, but it was a mere crust upon the surface covering an essential barbarism underneath. An interesting essay has been written upon "the popular frenzies of the eighteenth century." They make a curious list. As a rule the populace took no interest in politics, but when some episode chanced to arouse their passions, amazing scenes of violence ensued. There were riots in favour of Dr. Sacheverell in Anne's reign, against Walpole's Excise Bill (see p. 348), in favour of Wilkes's candidature for parliament (see p. 363), and, worst of all, the "No Popery" Riots of 1780. A modest Bill for the removal of a few of the penalties inflicted on Roman Catholics had recently been carried through Parliament with the unanimous approval of both Houses. The riots originated with a demonstration organised by misguided champions of intolerance, and it was these, no doubt, who sacked Romanist

chapels, but the movement rapidly degenerated into an exhibition of savagery unalloyed by any religious motive however misguided. At the end of the week during which the riots lasted, a considerable area of central London presented, in the words of an eye-witness, a "picture of a city sacked and abandoned to a ferocious enemy."

In fact London, and Paris also, had already become vast, but not yet civilised, cities. Our English eighteenth-century riots, often provoked by trivial or imaginary grievances, should help us to understand the appalling scenes witnessed in Revolutionary Paris, where, at any rate, great causes were at stake.

In some respects England presented features of barbarism unknown on the Continent. Nowhere on the Continent, it appears, was the execution of criminals made a public show. In London the condemned criminal was carried for more than two miles amidst uproarious crowds from Newgate to the scene of public execution at Tyburn (where the Marble Arch now stands). It was an age of inhumanity. "It is difficult," says the greatest historian of eighteenth-century England, "to measure the change that must have passed over the public mind since the days when the lunatics in Bedlam were constantly spoken of as one of the sights of London; when the maintenance of the African slave trade was a foremost object of English policy; when men and even women were publicly whipped in the streets; when skulls lined the top of Temple Bar and rotting corpses hung in gibbets along the Edgware Road; when prisoners exposed in the pillory not infrequently died through the ill-usage of the mob, and when the procession every six weeks of condemned criminals to Tyburn was one of the great festivals of London." [1]

Decay of religion

The Stuart period had been a time of splendid energies and furious controversies in the sphere of religion. But ever since the Restoration the fires of religious enthusiasm had been dying down, and in the first half of the eighteenth century they burnt very low indeed.

[1] Lecky, *History of England*, Popular edition, Vol. VII. p. 343.

It was an age when "reason" was glorified as the highest of faculties and "enthusiasm" denounced as the worst of follies. Many of the Whig bishops appointed by the government were learned and eloquent men, but their religion was generally that of Archbishop Tillotson, an admired divine of William III's reign, who said in a sermon that Christianity "only requires of us such duties as are suitable to the light of nature and do approve themselves to the best reason of mankind." "Such duties" proved in practice to be not very extensive. Several bishops never went near their dioceses. In many parishes services were only held once a month by a visiting curate hired for the purpose by a non-resident rector; for such rectors one or more livings simply provided an unearned income. The philosopher Hume, himself a disbeliever in religion, defended the maintenance of the Established Church as a means of providing fixed incomes for literary men—but sportsmen were more numerous than students among the possessors of these fixed incomes.

As with the Church, so with Dissent. The Dissenters had secured toleration, and the laws which still nominally excluded them from office under the Crown were scarcely ever enforced. But the ardent spirit of Puritanism seemed to have departed out of the Dissenting bodies, and left them as lifeless and inert as the Established Church. A very intelligent French visitor in the reign of George I reported that "there was no religion in England."

It was in an England thus spiritually dead to all appearance that John Wesley and his friends began their great crusade for the revival of religion. From 1729 to 1735 there existed in the gay, roystering, port-drinking University of Oxford, as it was in those days, a little society of dons and undergraduates nicknamed the Holy Club, or the Methodists. There were sixteen members including John Wesley and his brother Charles, and George Whitefield. They read and studied and debated upon their religion, and gave it practical application by holding services for the convicts in the prison, and running a school for the children of the slums. Some years later, in 1739, White-

The Methodists

field began to preach in the open air to the coal-miners of Kingswood outside Bristol. He was a marvellous orator, and was extraordinarily successful in his appeals to the vast, half-savage congregations that thronged to hear him. He persuaded Wesley to undertake a similar work.

Wesley, who was a scholar and a gentleman, was at first reluctant to do anything so unconventional, but he took the plunge, and thenceforth never drew back. For the next fifty-one years (1739–1791) till his death at the age of eighty-seven, Wesley travelled continually up and down England and Scotland, preaching as he went. He averaged fifteen sermons a week and 5000 miles on horseback a year. Here is a typical day taken at random from his *Journal*, which has been described as "the most amazing record of human exertion ever penned by man":—"Preached at Gloucester at five in the morning [1] to two or three thousand people; at eleven preached at Runwick to more than a thousand and again in the afternoon; then at Stanley a sermon two hours long to about three thousand; and finally a sermon at Ebbly."

In the earlier part of his career Wesley (and with him we must include the growing body of disciples that followed in his footsteps) encountered much opposition, sometimes physically violent. The somnolent clergy disliked his intrusions into their parishes, and the roughs required little encouragement to break up his meetings. Nor were their actions entirely without excuse. The preaching of both Wesley and Whitefield often roused religious passions to the pitch of hysteria. We read of almost gruesome manifestations, such as St. Paul seems to have rebuked in the more unbalanced members of his churches—shriekings, convulsions, "speaking with tongues" as it is called in the New Testament. But as time passed these unhealthy by-products of the religious revival were eliminated.

Wesley himself remained all his life a clergyman of the Established Church, but the Church proved incapable of retaining and making its own the movement he had

[1] In old age Wesley declared that preaching at five in the morning was the healthiest of exercises: certainly he found it so.

launched. After controversies which need not here be recorded, Wesley took the momentous step of ordaining ministers himself, and, since Wesley was not a bishop, these could not be ministers of the Established Church. Thus the Wesleyan or Methodist Dissenting Churches arose. To-day they number 32,000,000 members in the British Empire and America, and constitute the largest religious body in the latter country. Yet Wesley's missionary movement also exercised a profound influence within the Established Church. As the century advanced a new type of clergyman, earnest, emotional and devout, began to become increasingly common, the "Evangelicals" as they were called; and the Evangelical movement was largely recruited from among Wesley's disciples.

The effects of the movement upon the life of the nation at large belong to the latter rather than the earlier part of our period, but it will be convenient to say something about them here. The movement kindled an enthusiasm for foreign missions, and out of that grew the agitation for the abolition of the Slave Trade, accomplished in 1807. It kindled a spirit of practical charity which found outlets in many directions, notably in the reform of prisons, due in the main to the labours of John Howard. There is also little doubt that the fervent piety of thousands of Wesley's humble disciples proved to be a kind of inoculation against the infection of the doctrines of the French Revolution. The French Revolution attacked the Christian Church, and that created an invincible prejudice against it in the minds of many who might otherwise have welcomed the purely political side of its programme.

(ii) *Politics and Wars*

So far as political history is concerned our first forty years contain one great name, that of Sir Robert Walpole, and they may be conveniently divided into three periods :— before Walpole's ministry (1714–1721), Walpole's ministry (1721–1742), and after Walpole's ministry (1742–1754).

The first period was a somewhat agitated one, marked by

a Jacobite rebellion, a brief but alarming crisis in foreign policy, and a financial catastrophe. Various Whig ministers strove for the first place in the government, but the only name that need be remembered is that of Stanhope, formerly a general in the War of the Spanish Succession, who was foreign minister during the crisis just mentioned

The Jacobite rising of 1715

The Jacobite rising of 1715 was a very half-hearted undertaking under incompetent management. The Earl of Mar, who led the rebels in Scotland, was defeated at Sheriffmuir, and Lord Derwentwater, who led them in the north of England, surrendered at Preston. Forty of the rebels were executed. None the less the Whig government was alarmed, and proceeded to make an important alteration in the constitution. Under the Triennial Act of William III's reign a general election was due for the year 1718, and the government, fearing that Jacobite agitation might still be dangerously active at that date, carried through parliament in 1716 a Septennial Act prolonging the life of the present and all future parliaments from three to seven years. This Act has often been cited as an extreme example of the legal sovereignty of parliament. If a parliament elected for three years could add four years to its own duration, it could clearly, in legal theory, add forty or four hundred years, and make membership hereditary. Parliament, once elected, is legally omnipotent, and we are protected from such fantastic abuses of its omnipotence only by the good sense of its members. In this respect the English parliament occupies a position unlike that of almost all other representative bodies in the world. In America or France, for example, where parliamentary institutions are comparatively modern, there is a written "Constitution" limiting the authority of the parliament.

The motive of the Septennial Act was obviously fear of the electorate, and its effect was to strengthen the control of the government over the House of Commons. This was good in so far as it promoted stability and internal peace, but bad in so far as it increased, as no doubt it did, the power of "corruption" as described in the previous section.

Though the Pretender's invasion had ended in ridiculous failure, the security of the House of Hanover was threatened in the next few years by the course of events in Europe. The Treaty of Utrecht, at the end of Anne's reign, had deprived Spain of her large provinces in Italy; and Spain, under the guidance of an extremely bold and skilful Italian minister named Alberoni, determined to get some or all of them back again. England and Holland, Austria and France, the other parties to the Treaty of Utrecht, were determined to prevent this. At the same time, George I, as Elector of Hanover, was involved in a quarrel with Charles XII of Sweden, one of the greatest soldiers of the day. Alberoni got into touch with Charles XII at the other end of Europe, and planned to convey a Swedish army in Spanish ships to England, to drive out George I and install the Pretender. Stanhope was thoroughly alarmed and actually offered to buy off Alberoni with the surrender of Gibraltar. Luckily Alberoni refused; an English fleet was sent to the Mediterranean under Byng, and destroyed the Spanish fleet off Cape Passaro in Sicily in 1718. The chief importance of these events is that they marked the beginnings of an alliance with France, which was the leading feature of our foreign policy for the next twenty years.

Cardinal Alberoni

Thus the Treaty of Utrecht was upheld. For England that Treaty had secured trading privileges in the Spanish American empire, and the value of such trade, though great, was vastly exaggerated by people who had not forgotten the dreams of "El Dorado" (the Golden Land) that had inspired the early explorers. Consequently extravagant expectations were cherished as to the prospects of the South Sea Company, which was formed to exploit this trade. At the same time the wars which led up to the Treaty of Utrecht had raised the National Debt to the alarming figure of £54,000,000, and the government promoted a rash scheme for paying off the Debt by giving the fund-holders South Sea stock in exchange for their Government stock. Stock exchange business was in its infancy, and financiers and their customers were equally foolish and

The South Sea Bubble

credulous. As a result South Sea stock rose to impossible prices and then collapsed. Thousands were ruined, and indignation naturally turned against the government. Walpole, however, had publicly criticised the scheme from the first, and he was now called upon to take charge of the Government and retrieve the situation.

Walpole was chief minister for twenty-one consecutive years (1721–1742), a longer period than has fallen to any of his successors, or to any of his predecessors except Lord Burghley in Elizabeth's reign. He is generally reckoned the first "Prime Minister," though the title was unknown in his day except as an occasional term of abuse. Our Cabinet system, and with it the position of the Prime Minister, has been of slow and subtle growth. In one sense "Prime Ministers" begin before Walpole, with the accession of George I, who, knowing no English, refrained from presiding at the meetings of his Council. We take Walpole as the first Prime Minister because his immediate predecessors have been forgotten. Yet Walpole's position was very different from that of the Prime Minister to-day, as the following comparison will show.

Walpole as Prime Minister

The Prime Minister's position may be defined by describing his relations with the King, the Cabinet, and the House of Commons. Take first the modern Prime Minister. From the king he has nothing to fear, for the king observes a scrupulous neutrality in all that concerns party politics. In his Cabinet he is master; it is clearly understood that a Cabinet, like a jury, must act in unanimity, and that each minister must, in public, support the policy arrived at by agreement at Cabinet meetings, which are always secret. A minister who wishes to oppose must first leave the Cabinet. In the Commons he is supported by a disciplined party of members who have been elected not so much to express their own ideas as to support the policy of their leaders.

But in all three respects Walpole's position was very much less secure. George I supported him, but he was under no obligation to do so. George II, when he came to the throne, immediately dismissed Walpole, and only recalled

him when his own nominee, Compton, declared that parliament would tolerate no other leader. Thenceforth George II accepted Walpole, but the king had to be handled with care. It was said that Walpole used to confide his policy to the queen, who had much more brains than her husband; that the queen confided it to the king; and the king confided it as his own royal policy to Walpole, who thereupon obediently accepted it. In the Cabinet, again, there was no accepted tradition of loyalty and co-operation. Walpole, it was said, was jealous of able men as colleagues, and gradually got rid of them all, confiding their places to docile and second-rate men. This is partly true, but Walpole was justified by the conduct of his able colleagues, who used Cabinet secrets as instruments for attacking him in parliament. Lastly, Walpole would have had no disciplined body of supporters in parliament if he had not maintained such a body by the distribution of bribes in the form of pensions and offices at court.

Thus party management played an important part in politics, and Walpole, for all his great abilities, would have been lost without the assistance of the Duke of Newcastle. This extraordinary and ridiculous person held high office almost continuously from 1724 to 1762, yet of politics in the proper sense, of statesmanship, he never possessed any understanding, nor indeed any desire or capacity to understand. He was a very wealthy nobleman with a passion for political intrigue and party management. No one equalled him in the arts of securing results at elections; no one equalled him in the arts of inducing the elected to vote in the proper manner in the House. Thus he was indispensable. So long as he gave his services to statesmen of ability all might be well. At last, however, in 1754, by sheer seniority he became Prime Minister himself, and then England nearly ran upon the rocks—as will appear in the next chapter.

The Duke of Newcastle

Each system of government has its own defects. The arts required to secure power are never quite the same as the arts required in wisely using it. In a modern democracy controlled by newspapers and popular oratory, it might con-

ceivably happen that a mere man of words, without brains or character, secured control. In eighteenth-century England the danger lay in another direction.

Happy, it has been said, is the country whose history is dull. If that be so, Walpolian England was happy. Walpole was a coarse, cheery, hard-drinking, hard-riding Norfolk squire; but if socially he belonged to the landed gentry, his instincts were those of a business man. The object of his policy was commercial prosperity, and for this England needed peace and quiet, at home and abroad. His aim was to give the country a complete rest, after all the religious, political, constitutional and financial agitations which had followed one upon another with hardly a break since the days of Charles I; and he succeeded admirably in his task. Peace meant economy, and lowered taxes encouraged trade. Supported by his French alliance, he carefully avoided European entanglements. "Fifty thousand men killed in Europe this year," he said in 1735, "and not a single Englishman." Legislative reforms, even though excellent, he discouraged because of the opposition they would provoke. In 1733 he introduced an Excise Bill which would have greatly improved the methods of raising revenue from import duties. But excise was an unpopular term, being associated with the financial measures of the Roundhead rebels; a violent and stupid agitation arose, and Walpole dropped his scheme. For the same reason he refused to support measures equally admirable in a different sphere for the removal of some of the remaining hardships inflicted by law upon Dissenters. Walpole's epitaph might be taken from the *Book of Judges:* "And the land had rest twenty years."

Walpole's Policy

But a spirited people do not enjoy rest for an indefinite period. Peace promotes trade, but trade promotes war. By the Treaty of Utrecht England was entitled to send one ship annually with merchandise to Spanish America. Needless to say the limitation involved in this clause was transgressed, and conflicts arose between English merchants and Spanish officials. There was also a

The Spanish War

dispute as to the frontier dividing Spanish Florida from the newly-founded English colony of Georgia. An agitation for war arose, associated with the name of Captain Jenkins, who was reputed to have had his ears cut off by Spanish coast-guards. In 1739 Walpole gave way to the clamour and declared war, and in the following year the new imperialistic spirit found expression in the composition of *Rule Britannia*. Walpole thought the war a mistake :—"They are ringing the bells now," he said: "they will soon be wringing their hands." A modern Prime Minister would have resigned rather than undertake a policy he disbelieved in, but Walpole was "the king's minister," and the king begged him to stay. This Spanish war dragged on for nine years, with few notable events, and was concluded with a treaty that did not mention the subject that had caused the war. In fact the Spanish war was soon submerged in another war of quite a different character, namely, the War of the Austrian Succession.

The War of the Austrian Succession

Austria is one of those names which mean different things in different periods. In the early eighteenth century "Austria" means the territories directly governed by the person who was nominally Roman Emperor and King of Germany, territories represented on the modern map by Austria, Hungary, part of Jugoslavia, all Czechoslovakia, and an important province of Germany called Silesia. Germany was divided into many separate States, of which Prussia was already the most important. During most of the Walpole period two persons as peaceable as Walpole himself had ruled in Austria and Prussia. The Emperor Charles VI was principally occupied in trying to secure that his dominions should pass to his daughter, Maria Theresa, and that the Imperial title should pass to her husband; for he had no son. These arrangements were embodied in a document called the Pragmatic Sanction, and almost all the rulers of Europe had undertaken to respect its provisions. Prussia was ruled by Frederick William I, a savage old gentleman with a passion for soldiers, who had drilled and organised the best army in Europe; but he loved

his soldiers much too much to expose them to the dangers of war. In 1740 both these princes died. Charles VI's death proved the worthlessness of the "scraps of paper" he had collected on behalf of his daughter. The Elector of Bavaria claimed the Imperial title; France supported him; the new King of Prussia, known to history as Frederick the Great, coolly occupied the province of Silesia. George II, regarding Prussia as a dangerous rival of Hanover in North Germany, was eager to join Austria, while many of his English subjects, who cared nothing for Austria or Prussia, were quite ready to fight France. Newcastle was one of these, and it was mainly owing to his dislike of Walpole's policy that Walpole lost much ground in the general election of 1741 and resigned in 1742.

Power now passed to Carteret, who was eagerly interested in the king's plans for intervention in the German war. An Anglo-Hanoverian army won a battle at Dettingen near the Rhine in 1743. France declared war on England, and defeated us at Fontenoy in 1745, owing her victory to the splendid courage of the Irish troops in her service. English colonists fought French colonists in America, and captured the French fortress of Louisburg on an island at the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and in India the troops of the French East India Company captured Madras. But the most exciting incident of the war for English people was the Jacobite rising of 1745.

Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, son of "James III," landed with seven companions in the Western High-

The "forty-five"

lands on July 25. On September 21, at the head of 2500 Highlanders, he defeated Cope at Preston Pans, near Edinburgh. He crossed the Border with 6000 men and reached Derby on December 5. London was in a state of abject panic. But there was really little cause for it; the invasion received hardly any support in England, and armies more powerful than any force the Pretender could secure were already in the field against it. Charles Edward rapidly withdrew, and after one more victory at Falkirk was completely defeated by the Duke of Cumberland at Culloden

Moor. After many adventures he escaped to France, but it would have been better for him had he died with his brave adherents on his last battle-field. He was then a charming young man of twenty-six; all that lay ahead of him was forty years of aimless exile; he died a confirmed drunkard. Jacobitism had shot its last bolt in 1745. It was proved that though England cared but little for its Hanoverian kings, it would not stir a finger to turn them out in the interests of their Roman Catholic rivals.

The Treaty of Aix

But before the coming of Charles Edward, Carteret, the war minister who succeeded Walpole, had himself fallen from power. He lacked the arts of controlling parliament and was suspected of promoting Hanoverian rather than English interests. Walpole's disciples returned to power, under the leadership of Henry Pelham, the younger and abler brother of the Duke of Newcastle, and Pelham's ministry, called the Broad-bottomed ministry because it included all sections of the Whig party, carried on a confused war to an inconclusive peace. By the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748, England restored Louisburg and France restored Madras. Neither the rival colonists in America nor the rival Companies in India were satisfied with this result, but Pelham and Newcastle were uninterested in imperial ambitions. Six very quiet years (1748–1754) followed, ending with the death of Pelham. "Now," said George II, "I shall have no more peace." He was quite right.

CHAPTER II

PITT AND THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR (1754–1763)

When Newcastle became Prime Minister his country was drifting into a war which would decide whether Britain or France should be supreme in North America and in India—in fact the decisive war in the development of the British Empire and of the United States that was to be. Newcastle was, of course, entirely unaware of this. Indeed, there were but few men in the country who clearly grasped the situation, and among these few was William Pitt, long afterwards Earl of Chatham.

Pitt was a country gentleman of no great wealth, who had entered the House of Commons in 1735. Here he quickly made his mark as the leader of a small group of young men, derisively nicknamed "the Boys" or "the Patriots." Walpole had just been confirmed in his authority for the third time by the most successful of Newcastle's general elections, but these young men proceeded to attack him with the utmost vehemence and intrepidity. They denounced his corruption at home and his indifference to the prestige of his country abroad—two lines of attack which indicate the guiding principles of Pitt's whole career from first to last. He hated and despised corruption and looked beyond a corrupt House of Commons to what he called "the Great People." He openly denounced "rotten" boroughs—the epithet was his own—and, though he never advocated a democratic franchise, he was the first British statesman who was a democrat in the spirit if not in letter. At the same time he was a great British[1] Imperialist. We

Pitt and Imperialism

[1] The term "British" is peculiarly appropriate to Pitt, for he was the first English statesman to respect the Scots and welcome their co-operation.

detect again and again in his speeches, as in those of no statesman before him, that feeling which animates so much of the work of Mr. Kipling, the feeling that it is the destiny and the especial duty of the British race to conquer and rule a great empire spread all over the world, protected and united by means of an all-powerful navy.

Pitt had probably greater powers of thrilling and even terrifying the House of Commons than any other orator in our history. It was said that he was the greatest actor of his day; perhaps he was, but he believed every word he spoke. Modern historians have compared him with Wesley, and certainly each in their different ways led a movement of protest against the easy-going materialism of the age of Walpole. If Wesley preached the religion of Christ, Pitt preached the religion of patriotism, and just as the Wesleyan movement produced some of our most popular hymns, so the Pittite wars produced some of our most popular patriotic songs—*Hearts of Oak*, *The Bluebells of Scotland*, *The British Grenadiers*, for example.

Pitt played an important part in securing the overthrow of the too pacific Walpole. A year later he was playing an equally important part in overthrowing Carteret on the ground that he sacrificed the interests of England to those of the "despicable electorate" of Hanover. Since then, Pitt had served for nearly ten years under Pelham in a subordinate post, but on Pelham's death (1754) he had good claims to be made leader of the House of Commons under Newcastle. Newcastle, however, thought otherwise, and appointed a very stupid man named Robinson.

In the same year hostilities broke out between the English and French colonies in America. The English colonies stretched all along the eastern coast of what is now the United States. Nearly all of them had been established in the Stuart period, and the colonists, now nearly two millions in number, were very many of them descendants of Puritans who had left England for the sake of religion. Each of the thirteen colonies had its own elected Assembly and its own governor,

English and French Colonies in America

appointed by the Crown. England had elaborately regulated their trade, but took little interest in their welfare in any other respect, and the colonists, concentrated on their small domestic affairs, took no wide views of their future destiny. They hardly looked beyond the Alleghany Mountains, which shut them off from the great plains beyond.

Very different was the character of the two French colonies of Canada and Louisiana. Their population was very small, only about fifty thousand, but their geographical situations, on the two great rivers, encouraged bold schemes of advance as much as the Alleghany Mountains discouraged such views in the English colonies; and a succession of ambitious French governors were planning to link Quebec on the St. Lawrence with New Orleans at the mouth of the Mississippi. A French fort had recently been established on the Ohio, and named Fort Duquesne.[1] Virginia was alarmed and sent a small expedition under a young surveyor named George Washington which was overpowered and forced to surrender (1754). In the next year Newcastle despatched an expedition from England under Braddock, which was decisively defeated.

Meanwhile war was beginning in Europe. Newcastle ordered Hawke to seize French ships in the Channel, imported German mercenaries to defend England from invasion, despatched an inadequate expedition under Byng to relieve Minorca, and, when Minorca fell, laid the whole of the blame on the admiral. Austria, our ally in the previous war, was now allied with France, and it was by more good fortune than by foresight that we secured what was to prove the invaluable alliance of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, who found himself attacked by France, Austria and Russia. But Newcastle had had enough; the old boroughmonger's nerve failed him, and he resigned, in spite of his corrupt majority, in November 1756.

The Seven Years' War

Pitt's speeches had convinced the commercial classes, whom the war principally concerned, that he alone could

[1] Afterwards Fort Pitt, and Pittsburgh, the centre of the American steel industry.

win it. And Pitt agreed with them: "I know," he said with characteristic audacity, "that I can save this country, and that no one else can." George II was very reluctant to accept as his chief minister the man who had outrageously insulted his beloved Electorate, but he really had no choice. The bitter pill was slightly sugared by the appointment of the Duke of Devonshire to what was nominally the chief place in the ministry. Pitt was leader of the Commons.

The Pitt-Devonshire Ministry

The Devonshire–Pitt ministry lasted five months. It represented the will of the people, but it was backed by no organised party in parliament. Unlike almost all ministries before and since, it had no support but its own merits. Pitt's task was to mobilise patriotism. The German mercenaries were sent back to Germany, and a national militia enlisted for home defence, each county being skilfully stimulated to surpass its neighbours in the number of its recruits. New battalions were added to the regular army, chiefly for service in America, among them two regiments recruited from among the Highland clans that had been fighting for the Pretender only eleven years before. Pitt also appealed to the patriotism of the American colonists in terms which made him, like no English statesman before or after him, a hero on the far side of the Atlantic. He organised co-operation with Frederick the Great, paying him the first of the series of subsidies by which, as he afterwards said, he "conquered America in Germany." But the life of the ministry was precarious. Pitt would fall as soon as he took an unpopular step, and he deliberately chose to risk his power in defence of the unfortunate Byng, who was condemned to death by court-martial for his failure at Minorca. On this point Pitt was defeated, and George II dismissed him.

Thus it was made plain that Pitt could not rule for long without the support of Newcastle's organised majority. Yet it was equally plain that England could not win the war without Pitt. After weeks of confusion the inevitable condition was accepted. Pitt returned to power to direct the war, with Newcastle as

The Pitt-Newcastle Ministry

his colleague to supply majorities for Pitt's measures. The Pitt–Newcastle ministry lasted from the spring of 1757 to the autumn of 1761.

Pitt saw that everything depended on a bold use of England's naval superiority. In 1757 and 1758 he despatched a series of expeditions to attack the French coast. These were not particularly successful in themselves, and were denounced as attempts to "break windows with guineas," but they compelled the French to retain large bodies of troops in France, and thus relieved the situation both in Germany and in America. In 1759 the French intended an invasion of England, but Pitt was so little alarmed that he despatched more troops to America than ever before. He had his county militia to maintain confidence at home, but in fact he relied absolutely on his admirals; and they did not disappoint him. Rodney destroyed at Havre the transports in which the French were to cross the Channel, Boscawen defeated the Toulon fleet off Lagos in Portugal, and Hawke defeated the Brest fleet in Quibéron Bay.

The German war began disastrously with a defeat of the Duke of Cumberland at Hastenbeck in 1757, but thereafter the Anglo-Hanoverian army was led by Ferdinand of Brunswick, and protected Prussia on the west while Frederick the Great dealt with the Austrians and Russians. Its chief victory was at Minden, in "that wonderful year," 1759.

Little progress was made in America in 1757 and 1758 owing to the incompetence of elderly commanders, but in 1759 Pitt, boldly ignoring claims of seniority, entrusted his armies—about 20,000 British regulars and 20,000 colonials—to men of his own choice, Amherst as commander-in-chief, and Wolfe, who was to attack Quebec from the estuary of the St. Lawrence, supported by a naval contingent under Saunders.[1] Wolfe was a young man of thirty-three, of weak health and a most

The Conquest of Canada

[1] Saunders's navigating officer, whose charts of the river proved invaluable, was James Cook, afterwards famous as the discoverer of Australia.

unmilitary countenance, and apt, as the well-known story shows, to quote poetry in a crisis—not at all the sort of man to be approved in orthodox military circles. But Pitt recognised in him a dashing genius akin to his own. Quebec was bravely and skilfully defended, and Wolfe's surprise attack and his victory on the Plains of Abraham provided the most splendid of all the great tales of victory that adorned 1759. Its fame has entirely obscured the interesting story of the American war in 1760. Eight months after the victory and death of Wolfe, the French advanced upon Quebec, defeated the English garrison on the Heights of Abraham, and besieged them in Quebec. The St. Lawrence was still frozen and the fate of the city depended on the pattern of the flag flown from the first ships that were able to ascend the river. It proved to be a British flag. Sea power had decided the day and Quebec was saved. In the same year Amherst captured Montreal and the war in America was over.

India, Pitt emphatically declared, was more important to us than America, but the influence of Pitt's government on the Indian sphere of the war was slight, and it will be best to reserve the whole history of eighteenth-century India for a separate chapter.

The victories of the Seven Years' War were, by modern standards, very cheaply won. The conquest of Canada is said to have cost us only 1500 lives. The total British forces at their maximum numbered only about 116,000, a little over 1 per cent. of the population, whereas, in the Great War, the belligerents put fully 10 per cent. of their populations into the field. The National Debt was doubled, and rose to £140,000,000, but, thanks to sea power, the foreign trade of the country increased steadily throughout the war.

Pitt was a very great war minister, great in the boldness of his plans and the skill with which he selected the agents of their execution, great also in his gift for inspiring whole-hearted and patriotic confidence. No one since Queen Elizabeth in her old age had won such a place in English hearts. But he was a very trying colleague

The fall of Pitt

for his fellow-ministers. An acute contemporary who knew him well described him as "single, imperious, proud, enthusiastic." He was more fitted to rule as a despot than to co-operate with a Cabinet. He expected his colleagues to conduct themselves as his humble servants; and had an unpleasant habit of threatening them with impeachment when they disagreed with him. His temper was at times terrible, and it should be remembered in excuse of this that he constantly suffered from the worst form of gout. As soon as the crisis of the war was over his colleagues were unlikely to endure him much longer. But when would the war be over? Pitt seemed to want, in modern phrase, to "paint the whole map red"; to annex every colony of France, and, if Spain joined the war as he expected, every island colony of Spain. Others thought this quite unnecessary, and the country was growing tired of the seemingly endless war in Germany. Moreover, a new king had come to the throne, George III, a genuine Englishman, who aspired to restore royal power, and looked forward to a speedy peace, after which he could undertake to forward these ambitions.

Pitt fell in October 1761. He knew that Spain was determined to declare war on us, and wished to declare war on Spain before she was ready. The Cabinet, encouraged by the king, refused, and Pitt resigned. He was proved to have been right, for Spain declared war and the British fleet captured Havana in Cuba and Manilla in the Philippines. But the new government, with Bute, the king's nominee, as Prime Minister, pressed on negotiations for peace. When these were completed they were carried through parliament by means of an unprecedented expenditure in bribes, organised on the king's behalf by Henry Fox, whose son was to be the lifelong rival of the younger Pitt.

Pitt opposed the terms of the Peace of Paris, but, though more could have been secured, they were adequate. Minorca was restored to us. In America we obtained Canada from France and Florida from Spain, and some, though not all, of the French West Indian Islands,

The Peace of Paris

and in India the French were excluded from Bengal. Pitt said that we should also have demanded Louisiana, Cuba and the Philippines, and deprived the French of their share of the Newfoundland fisheries. He also bitterly attacked the policy of deserting Frederick the Great. But Frederick had practically secured his position, and was himself one who always deserted an ally as soon as he considered that his own interests would be served by doing so.

This Treaty of Paris marks a climax of British prestige in war and conquest like that marked by the Treaty of Utrecht exactly fifty years before. The Treaty of Utrecht was followed by the "quiet period" of Walpole. The period following the Treaty of Paris was, however, the reverse of quiet, as the following chapters will show.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST PART OF GEORGE III'S REIGN (1760–1791)

(i) *The King, the Whigs and the People*

The policy of George III

GEORGE II had died in the middle of the Seven Years' War, and had been succeeded by his grandson, a young man of twenty-two who carefully distinguished himself from his two predecessors by declaring that he "gloried in the name of Briton." It was only natural that the new king should seek to restore royal power, and that he should regard the long domination of the Whigs as an evil now to be obliterated as completely as the accession of Charles II, a hundred years before, had obliterated the rule of the Puritan republicans. But the roots of the Whigs were much more deeply planted in the soil of the national life than had been the roots of the republicans. Cromwell had defied parliament, and a single free general election swept Cromwellism out of existence: Walpole and Newcastle had ruled and controlled the parliamentary machine. Only in two ways could their power be brought to an end, either by a reform of parliament which would make their system of corruption impossible, or else by using their own weapons of corruption against them. Hardly anyone except Pitt even dreamed of the former method in 1760, and George III and his friends, the revived Tory party, chose the latter.

Since 1714 the Tory party had hardly counted in politics. Its leader at the end of Anne's reign, Bolingbroke, had been driven out of the country, and in despair betook himself to the Pretender. Yet though in 1716 he abandoned Jacobitism in disgust, and got leave from George I in 1723 to return

to England, the intense jealousy of Walpole kept him excluded from the House of Lords and consequently from all share in active politics. He took up journalism, attacked Walpole in *The Craftsman*, and became the ally of Pitt and other anti-Walpolian Whigs. He also made friends with the Prince of Wales, selected a tutor for his son, the future George III, and wrote a treatise entitled *The Patriot King*, indicating what he considered the true place of monarchy in the British constitution. One wonders whether, when he died in 1750, he realised that the little prince, soon to begin the study of his book, would avenge the long tragedy of his own career and destroy the power of the Whigs.

In some ways the king's task might seem far from difficult. There were two main instruments of corruption, the distribution of court "places" and state pensions, and the management of rotten boroughs. Of these the former belonged by right to the king and he could use them as he pleased; of the boroughs, some were situated on royal estates and were thus easily controlled as the court "places," and as for the rest, if the king went into the borough-market with the resources of the royal income at his disposal, the greatest of Whig lords might tremble for the result. Also, the Whig party was divided into rival factions; some were tired of the war, and nearly all were tired of Pitt. Pitt, in fact, was only nominally a Whig; he was a great patriotic freelance in politics, trusting "the People" rather than the party machine, and if the king had only wanted to break down Whig ascendancy he might have had Pitt as an ally. But Pitt would have overshadowed the throne, and George preferred him as an enemy. In his first speech at his accession he antagonised Pitt by describing the war as "bloody and expensive" and advocating a speedy peace.

George at once introduced his own agent, Lord Bute, into the Cabinet. We have seen how Pitt resigned in 1761. Newcastle was driven from office in 1762, and Bute became Prime Minister. He was to be maintained in power by a group called "the king's friends,"

Ministry of Bute

who differed from the Whigs of the last reign only in this, that they looked to the king instead of Newcastle as their paymaster. The king, in fact, became a party politician. But it would not do. Bute was a pompous and unpopular Scotsman, and many who were prepared to welcome some restoration of royal power did not desire the king to devote himself to corrupt party politics. Bute resigned his office after a year, probably because he was unnerved by the hootings of the London mob.

Grenville and Rockingham

George then turned to Grenville, the leader of that section of the Whigs which had opposed the Seven Years' War in its later stages, as costing more than it was worth. Grenville was an able and conscientious politician, who exasperated his royal master with long lectures. After two years (1763–1765), George dismissed him in anger, and accepted for the moment a restoration of the old Whig party. The Whigs had found a new leader in Rockingham, but Newcastle still supplied the support of his waning political influence. If Pitt had consented to join the Ministry it might have lasted, but, without him, it endured for one year only, being undermined both in the Cabinet and in parliament by the activities of "the king's friends."

Ministry of Chatham

Then (1766) came Pitt's turn. Like George III, Pitt disliked organised parties, though for very different reasons. The king regarded them as the chief obstacle to royal power, whereas Pitt disliked them as instruments of corruption, which prevented the government from responding to the will of "the People." Pitt's government, therefore, was a miscellaneous collection of individuals chosen from all parties on their merits. Unfortunately such a government needed a master-mind to direct and unify its counsels, and Pitt was prostrated by prolonged illness immediately after he had accepted office. Besides, he had for the moment impaired his unique popularity with the country by accepting the earldom of Chatham. Pitt had won his position as the incorruptible "Great Commoner," and the peerage was, quite unreasonably, regarded as a bribe.

The Duke of Grafton succeeded, in name, to the place Pitt vacated by illness, but he preferred Newmarket to Westminster, and the control of the government passed into the hands of Lord North. At last the king had found an ideal instrument for his purpose. North was an indolent man with but little will of his own, and was thus perfectly ready to allow the king to dictate his policy. At the same time he was an excellent manager of political business, and his ready wit and kindly disposition made him a great favourite in the House of Commons. Grafton resigned in 1770, and for the next twelve years (1770–1782) George III ruled the country with the assistance of North as his Prime Minister and parliamentary manager. During those years England lost her American colonies.

Grafton and North

While king and Whigs had been struggling to secure control of the House of Commons, the House itself entered on a momentous quarrel with a section of the electorate. In 1768 the electors of Middlesex elected as their representative a certain John Wilkes. Wilkes was in himself a man of small merit or importance, but, five years earlier, he had incurred the hostility of the king and his ministers by a series of attacks on the king's policy in a paper called the *North Briton*, and he had been prosecuted and convicted under circumstances which some of the best lawyers held to involve illegal action by the government. The new House of Commons, dominated by "the king's friends," at once expelled him. He was re-elected; expelled and declared incapable of sitting in the existing parliament; re-elected a second time; whereupon the House awarded his seat to the defeated candidate. This was merely a glaring extension of the absurd system already mentioned (see p. 338), whereby the House decided disputed elections. It meant that the House and not the electorate was judge of how the House should be composed. London rioted in the interests of "Wilkes and Liberty," and the victim of parliamentary tyranny became the hero of the hour. Chatham, who had returned to politics, defended his

The Middlesex election

claims in the House of Lords, and the government was so much afraid of Chatham's influence that it closed its debates to visitors.

This discreditable Wilkes affair of 1769 may be regarded as the beginning of the democratic movement in English politics. A Society of Supporters of the Bill of Rights was formed by an energetic agitator called Horne, public political meetings were held —the first in our history—and parliamentary candidates were selected who pledged themselves to vote for manhood suffrage, and the exclusion of "place" holders and pensioners from the House of Commons. Little came of it at the time. A variety of Reform Bills for abolishing rotten boroughs were introduced in the next twenty-five years, but none of them passed. When the Whigs returned to power in 1782 they carried a Bill (Burke's Economical Reform Act) for the exclusion of certain classes of "place" holders from the House of Commons. Then came the French Revolution and the cause of democracy was discredited until some time after the battle of Waterloo; but though discredited, its supporters were never entirely extinguished, and revived as the "Radicals" of the 1820's and the Chartists of the 1830's.

The Parliamentary Reform movement

In one important particular, however, the democratic movement secured an immediate and decisive victory. Something was said in the previous volume (see p. 327) about the early history of newspapers. They began under the early Stuart kings and had already attained considerable power and importance in the reign of Queen Anne. Since then the influence and circulation of the Press had steadily increased, and the Wilkes agitation had been assisted by an anonymous journalist of extraordinary skill and virulence who signed himself "Junius." Junius, says a modern historian, excelled in the arts of "assuming an attitude of moral and political superiority, of evading difficulties, insinuating unproved charges, and imputing unworthy motives"—arts which, we must reluctantly recognise, continue to be characteristic weaknesses of the political journalist. At this time the

Parliament and the Press

reporting of parliamentary debates was still illegal, and the most curious devices were adopted to evade the law, such as calling the House of Commons the Senate of Lilliput and disguising the names of the speakers.[1]

In 1771 a member protested against insulting comments upon himself in one of these reports. The House ordered the arrest of certain printers, and one of them was arrested in the City of London without the approval of the City magistrates, which was a breach of the privileges of the City. Wilkes, now an alderman, gladly took up this new quarrel with his old enemies, and the messenger of the House was arrested by order of the City magistrates. The House was terrified at the prospect of another quarrel with Wilkes, and from that date onwards the right of the Press to report debates was never questioned. It is perhaps interesting to note that the oldest London paper surviving to-day, *The Morning Post*, was founded in the next year, 1772. *The Times* followed before the end of the century and rapidly became the leading daily newspaper. It was at about this date also that newspapers first began to increase their profits by selling part of their space to commercial advertisers.

Three Whig Governments

George Washington did more than liberate the colonies; he also liberated England from the personal rule of George III. George III and North had made the submission of the colonies the main object of their policy, and when Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, North insisted on resigning, and the king had to accept the return of the Whigs (1782), who made peace with America and her allies, and carried the Act, described on the previous page, which restricted the number of "placemen." But once again the Whigs were ruined by the personal rivalries of their leaders. Rockingham, their respected though commonplace Prime Minister, died and the king gave his place to Shelburne, an able but unscrupulous man who was intensely unpopular with the rest of the party. In

[1] The great Dr. Johnson in his early days made some money out of this species of composition, and he tells us that he always arranged that "the Whig dogs" got the worst of it. "Junius" was probably Sir Philip Francis, afterwards the enemy of Warren Hastings.

order to defeat Shelburne, Charles James Fox formed a coalition with Lord North, whose policy he had previously opposed with unmeasured violence. The king was forced to accept a ministry led by Fox and North, but he was determined not to endure it for long. The Coalition introduced a Bill to regulate the government of India, and the king sent a message to the House of Lords intimating that he should regard every peer who voted for the Bill as his enemy. This bold, improper, but perhaps excusable device proved successful. The Bill was defeated; the king immediately dismissed his ministers and installed the younger Pitt, who, though only twenty-four, had already made his mark as an extremely able debater. In the general election which followed, the unique popularity of Pitt's name, combined with the utmost exertion of all the agencies of corruption at the king's disposal,[1] secured what was, in those days of rotten boroughs, an unprecedented "turnover" of seats. A hundred and forty coalitionists, nicknamed Fox's Martyrs,[2] lost their seats.

The Younger Pitt and George III

Pitt continued Prime Minister for eighteen years (1783–1801), enjoying a more complete ascendancy both over his colleagues in Cabinet and his party in the House of Commons than any of his predecessors. With his accession to power it may be said that George III abandoned his attempt to restore royal power. He may have hoped that Pitt, being young, would prove docile. If so, he was disappointed. Pitt, however, though not docile, treated the king with the utmost deference, and George continued to exercise an important influence on politics until, in the last ten years of his reign, he lost his reason.

George III has been much abused by historians, for historians seem to have been mostly Whigs. Yet he had many

[1] Many histories assert that this election was comparatively free from corruption, and that Pitt secured his majority by his own merits and by the demerits of the Coalition; but modern research unhappily seems to disprove this.

[2] "Fox's Martyrs" is an allusion to the old but still popular book by Foxe about the martyrs of the Marian persecution.

Emery Walker Ltd. sc.

merits. He was a model of virtue in private life, though he failed to induce his sons to copy him in this respect. He was also intensely industrious and business-like in the discharge of all his political duties, much more so than many of his ministers. His interest in farming is well known; he was also devoted to good music and good pictures, and his splendid collection of books was, after his death, presented to the British Museum and formed the nucleus of the Library there. Finally, he possessed in the highest degree the kingly virtue of courage. It was he alone who, after the Gordon riots had been raging for several days, persuaded the government to use their undoubted legal right of employing soldiers to suppress the mob, declaring with emphasis that if they refused he would lead the Guards in person.

(ii) *The American Revolution, and Canada*

Political forecasts generally prove mistaken, but not always; and it is a remarkable fact that, long before the Seven Years' War, acute observers, both English and foreign, had foretold that England would soon lose her American colonies. The colonists were of many different types, but all of them were sturdy folk, whose ancestors, in many cases, had left the mother country with far from friendly feelings. In the north were the four New England colonies, of which the chief was Massachusetts, capital Boston. The New Englanders were hard-headed Puritans of the type that had refused to pay ship-money, and had dethroned Charles I. South of these, in New Jersey, were Scottish Covenanters. New York was non-British in origin, being conquered from the Dutch in 1664, and it is amusing to notice that of all the colonies it proved the least inclined to rebel against British control. In Pennsylvania there were Quakers and Germans. Virginia was, in the main, an English gentlemen's colony, but there were many Irish Ulstermen, driven out by English commercial tyranny, both in Virginia and in the Carolinas. Each colony had an elected Assembly and, since the Revolu-

The American colonists

tion of 1688, a Governor appointed in England, and bickerings between the two had long been fairly continuous.

England's interest in these colonies had been entirely commercial, and from the time of Cromwell onwards parliament had been building up an elaborate system of trade regulation, sometimes called the Mercantile System. The leading idea of this system (which all European governments applied, with variations, to their colonies) was that an empire ought to be, as far as possible, a self-sufficing commercial unit; that the purpose of colonies was to supply to the mother country, and not to the mother country's rivals, products which the mother country was otherwise compelled to buy from foreigners; and that colonies should take in exchange from the mother country, and not from the mother country's rivals, the goods which the mother country produced. For example, seventeenth-century England depended for many of the materials of shipbuilding upon imports from Scandinavia, and it was hoped that the American colonies would supply this deficiency.

The Mercantile System

These commercial regulations differed from any modern system of protection or imperial preference. Modern schemes seek to encourage imperial trade by freeing it from duties or by imposing higher duties on its rivals. The old mercantile system did not encourage or discourage; it ordered and forbade. The goods which could be exported only to England were not admitted free, but paid a duty on arrival. The system was, *in theory*, accepted as just, and as indeed the only conceivable system; and it was true that if colonial trade was hampered by many of the regulations, it was encouraged by others which excluded foreign goods from England in the interests of the colonial producer. *In practice*, however, it was not accepted, for there was wholesale smuggling, and the regulations were enforced as imperfectly as is the prohibition of alcohol among the descendants of our colonists to-day.

In fact the system, applicable enough to tropical colonies whose products are necessarily quite different from those of

the mother country, did not fit colonies whose climate and character were not very different from that of England. A colony was to supply what England lacked and to buy in return what England could supply. But New England, the most northern and the most fully developed group of colonies, was becoming much too like Old England. She wanted to manufacture her own hats and horseshoes, and found the Mercantile System barring her way. And it was New England that led the rebellion.

Colonial patriotism

There was in the colonies a strong sentiment of loyalty. Like King George III, most of the colonists "gloried in the name of Briton," but this loyalty was a sentiment only, and certainly did not include a docile respect for Acts of Parliament. These colonies were, as has been said already, small, self-contained settlements, easily irritated by any interference with their own affairs, and little interested in the larger affairs of the empire. Moreover, they had been taught that England undertook their defence in return for the benefits derived from their trade. Under the stimulus of Pitt's appeals they had raised considerable forces to fight the French, but the quality was not always good. Wolfe describes the colonial troops as "the most contemptible, cowardly dogs you can conceive, who desert by battalions, officers and all." It was by tradition England's business to fight and the colonists' business to trade, and the arts of smuggling served them very well in carrying on, at the height of the war, a lucrative trade with "their good friends the enemy."

The Stamp Act

The conquest of Canada hastened the outbreak of the quarrel. By removing the French menace it reduced the need for British military and naval protection. At the same time the American and other branches of the Seven Years' War had doubled the British National Debt. George Grenville, the new Prime Minister (1763–1765), was conscientiously economical. He determined to enforce the commercial laws more strictly than before, to establish permanently a portion of the British army in America, and to raise in America at least a part of

the money necessary for its support. The policy of keeping a regular force in the colonies had just received a striking justification. If the French were gone, the Red Indians remained, and in 1763 an Indian chief named Pontiac raided Virginia and Pennsylvania, and was only suppressed by Amherst's veterans, just about to embark for England. None the less the colonists regarded the force as in part designed for the maintenance of British authority over themselves and the suppression of smuggling. England might reply that it was only the policy already in action in Ireland; the parallel was not an attractive one.

If the presence of the force was unpopular, the cost of it was worse, yet Great Britain, having conferred the boon of the conquest of Canada, mainly from her own pocket, could hardly have asked her own taxpayers to pay the whole cost of a permanent force in America. Grenville urged the colonies to raise the money through their own Assemblies, and the fateful Stamp Act of 1765 was only imposed after their refusal. The reply to the Stamp Act was, "No taxation without representation," and patriotic Bostonians compared themselves with John Hampden; but the parallel is quaintly inappropriate. Hampden refused to pay ship-money because Charles I refused to summon parliament. The American "Hampdens" had refused to raise the money through their own Assemblies, and would equally have refused the offer of representation in the British parliament had the offer been made to them.

Ten years passed between the Stamp Act and the outbreak of war, and their story may be briefly told. The Act gave the lead to a small body of agitators, led by Samuel Adams of Boston, who rendered the collection of the tax impossible. Grenville's government fell, for quite other reasons, and when the Rockingham Whigs repealed the Act (1766), the agitators imagined that England had been successfully brow-beaten. Then came another change of government, and Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Cabinet nominally presided over by Chatham, imposed duties on tea and other imports (1767),

Ten Years' Agitation

though three years later all the duties except the tea duty, which raised a ridiculously small sum, were abandoned. Boston treated the tea duties as it had treated the Stamp Act, but not with the same results. George III, through Lord North, was now in control of parliament and policy, and he was not going to be frightened into abandoning his rights. In 1770 British troops, after severe provocation, fired on the Boston mob, and five Bostonians were "massacred." In 1773 came the serio-comic outrage of the Boston tea-party, when, as Carlyle says, "Boston Harbour was black with tea." The reply was a series of Acts of Parliament which closed Boston harbour, suspended the authority of the Massachusetts Assembly, and transferred the trial of rioters from Boston juries to English courts. A soldier, Gage, was appointed Governor of the colony. But to this, in turn, the Americans had their reply, and it was a remarkable one. Twelve of the thirteen colonies sent delegates to what came to be known as the Continental Congress of Philadelphia. Hitherto the colonists had shown an entire incapacity to co-operate with one another, and their intercourse had consisted almost entirely of quarrels. Were they now uniting in opposition to England? In the next year, 1775, the first battles, Lexington and Bunker's Hill, were fought on the outskirts of Boston.

Never, it has been said, was a great empire sundered upon such a trivial pretext. The fact is, the ties which bound together the colonists and the mother country were already weak to the point of rottenness, so that a very slight strain sufficed to snap them. At the same time there were many on both sides who deplored the quarrel; many pro-Americans in England, and many "loyalists" or "Tories," as they were called, in America. On the colonial side the revolution was the work of an energetic but small minority, some of whom from the first secretly sought independence, while others hoped for a settlement and reunion upon their own terms. The active loyalists were another minority, perhaps as large. The bulk of the population was indifferent.

Divergent views of the question

The British on their side were confronted by an extremely difficult problem, and there was a great divergence of views. At one extreme was that of George III, who held quite simply that the colonists were rebels and must be beaten into unconditional submission. It was a "John Bull" standpoint, and probably most Englishmen agreed with their king until they found the process of beating the colonists so very tedious and expensive; then they fell away and the king was left alone but undaunted, protesting till the last. At the other end of the scale were detached observers like Dean Tucker, who said in effect: "The colonies are a burden and a nuisance; let them go. British prosperity does not depend on these absurd commercial regulations, but on our own capital and enterprise." Adam Smith, the great exponent of the new doctrine of free trade, whose *Wealth of Nations* was published in the second year of the war, took much the same view, though he suggested colonial representation in the British parliament as the best policy for those who wished to retain the colonies.

Practical statesmen could hardly adopt the views of Smith and Tucker. The two greatest of that generation disagreed both with the king and with the arm-chair theorists, and with each other! Pitt was a strong imperialist, and upheld the Mercantile System, but he agreed with the Americans in condemning the Stamp Act. "I rejoice that America has resisted," he said. Pitt failed to see that the Mercantile System was as much the cause of that resistance as was the Stamp Act, though it was much less talked about. Yet Pitt, though not a logical thinker, was so great a man and enjoyed such immense prestige across the water that, had he been entrusted with power, he might have effected a reconciliation or at least a postponement of the quarrel.

Burke, the rising oracle of the Whigs, sharply distinguished between what was legal and what was expedient. The Stamp Act, he held, was perfectly legal, and much that was said in America perfectly foolish; but was such a policy worth its cost? "The question," he said in one of his profoundest reflections, "is not whether you have a right to

make these people miserable, but whether it is not your interest to make them happy." But Burke's policy was merely negative. He said in effect, "Go back to where you were in 1763." But he did not advocate the abandonment of the Mercantile System, and in fact no one at that date could have done so without also advocating the abandonment of the colonies, for the whole value of colonies was held to reside in the results obtained by regulating their trade.

Just before their victory at Bunker's Hill, the Americans took a step the importance of which they can hardly have realised. They appointed George Washington commander-in-chief of their army. Washington was a prosperous Virginian farmer and tobacco planter, whose ancestors had sided with Charles I, and had migrated to Virginia during the Commonwealth. He had distinguished himself above most Americans in the campaigns of the Seven Years' War, but he owed his appointment quite as much to the fact that he was a leading citizen of the leading southern colony. Hitherto the quarrel with England had been essentially a Bostonian affair: the appointment of Washington was meant as an indication that it was such no longer. Thus the rebels entrusted themselves to the leadership of one of the greatest men in history, and for the next six years of fighting (and sixteen subsequent years of troubled politics) he carried them and their cause upon his back.

Washington

For when it came to fighting, but few colonials liked the business. They had talked of tyranny, but they had not really experienced it. The thirteen "states," as we may now call them, were jealous of one another, and jealous of the Congress they had established. Congress raised the army but it could not pay it, for the states retained the purse-strings, and proved very reluctant to unloose them. Like the English parliamentarians in the Great Rebellion, the state politicians dreaded the "militarism" of their own army. They need not have done so, for what with short-service enlistment, lack of food and pay, and the indifference of the average American recruit

American Disunion

to the whole controversy, that army was more often than not in danger of fading out of existence. Washington, in face of every sort of discouragement and many defeats, kept an army in existence which eventually won the war. Of the faithful few who stood by him through thick and thin, a considerable number were emigrants not from England but from Ireland. "As for the genuine sons of Hibernia," says a contemporary, "it was enough for them to know that England was the antagonist."

The Declaration of Independence

In the second year of the war (1776) Congress issued a Declaration of Independence. It was drawn up by Thomas Jefferson, long afterwards a President of the United States, and opens with magnificent phrases, borrowed from the revolutionary philosophy already popular in France, asserting that "all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights." Then, coming down to earth, it enumerates the tyrannies of the government of George III, much as Pym's Grand Remonstrance had enumerated the tyrannies of Charles I, and concludes by asserting that all connection between the States and Great Britain "is, and ought to be, totally dissolved." Many signed the Declaration with reluctance, provoked to take the irrevocable step by the bad old English habit, so hateful to Pitt, of employing German mercenaries to fight English battles. If the English employed Germans, the Americans would seek the help of France, and the Declaration was a definite bid for a French alliance.

Saratoga and the French alliance

The war had begun with the investment of Boston, which contained the British garrison under Gage, soon succeeded by Sir William Howe. In 1776 Washington forced Howe to evacuate Boston, and Howe sailed for New York, a mainly loyalist city. Washington made for New York by land, but was driven from the city, which henceforth became the British headquarters. Howe was an indifferent soldier, and, like some of the parliamentary commanders against Charles I, he was so anxious to secure a friendly compromise and reunion that he did

not exert what little military talent he possessed. In 1777 another English army under Burgoyne invaded the colonies from Canada, but Howe failed to co-operate with it, and Burgoyne was surrounded and compelled to surrender at Saratoga. This American triumph was by no means counterbalanced by the fact that Howe had defeated Washington at Brandywine and occupied Philadelphia. Vergennes, the French foreign minister, had been carefully watching events, and Saratoga convinced him that the American cause was worth supporting. It might enable France to secure vengeance for her defeats in the Seven Years' War. In England the demand arose once more that Chatham should save his country. Chatham would have conciliated the Americans at any price short of complete independence, and then turned and rent the French. But even if such a policy could have succeeded, George III would not allow it to be tried, and Chatham was past trying it. In the course of a speech in which he protested against a Whig motion for granting American independence, he fell down in a fit and was carried home to die (1778).

In America the war dragged on without decisive results through 1778 and the two following years. The French alliance had as yet brought no substantial assistance, the American effort in men and money seemed growing weaker and weaker, and Cornwallis, the ablest of the English commanders, seemed to be conquering all the southern colonies. But in 1781, owing to the mismanagement of British sea power, Cornwallis was caught on the peninsula of Yorktown, in Virginia, between the American army and the French fleet. His surrender marked the end of the American war, not because further British effort was impossible, but because George III could find no more parliamentary support. North resigned and the Whigs had adopted the policy of surrender.

Yorktown and Gibraltar

For Englishmen, in fact, the whole aspect of the war had changed. It had become a war against the old national enemies, for Spain had joined France in 1779, had captured Minorca, and laid siege to Gibraltar. Rodney defeated a

Spanish fleet at Cape St. Vincent in 1780 and temporarily relieved Gibraltar, and in 1782 inflicted a shattering defeat on the French in the West Indies, at what is called "the Battle of the Saints." Meanwhile Governor Elliot was still holding out in Gibraltar, and, in September of the same year, succeeded in withstanding the heaviest naval bombardment that the resources of gunpowder had yet achieved. These successes redeemed the failure in America, and made France and Spain ready for peace.

By the Treaty of Versailles, 1783, Great Britain surrendered Minorca and Florida to Spain, and some West India islands and small African colonies to France. The American colonies were acknowledged independent, and Great Britain surrendered to them any claims she might have put forward to the unoccupied territory between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi. Beyond the Mississippi was Louisiana, which France had transferred to Spain twenty years before. The only important demand made by the ex-mother country on her former colonies was that the loyalists who had taken up arms on her behalf should be restored to their estates. This was refused, the Americans only undertaking that there should be no further victimisation of loyalists. Even this promise was flagrantly broken. It is estimated that about a hundred thousand of these unfortunate people were driven from the country by various forms of persecution. Most of them settled in Canada, and laid the foundations of the English, as distinct from the French, Canadian colony. The British government expended several million pounds on gifts and pensions to these refugees.

The Treaty of Versailles

While Great Britain was losing her old colonies, she was making her first experiments in the government of the new conquest which has now grown into the greatest of the British Dominions. The Treaty of 1763 gave us by right of conquest a French colony with perhaps 60,000 French inhabitants, and Grenville's government

Canada

immediately promised it representative institutions and English law. This was a rash beginning, as the French were totally unacquainted with and undesirous of either of these blessings. Happily Sir Guy Carleton, the admirable Governor who was sent out, was allowed to carry on the government as he thought best, and Grenville's promise remained unfulfilled. In 1774 North's government carried the Quebec Act, which gave full recognition to the Roman Catholic Church of the French colonists, and recognised its property and its right to tithes from Catholic, though not from Protestant, inhabitants. It established the English jury system for criminal cases but maintained French law for civil actions. This was one of the wisest and best Acts ever placed on our Statute Book, and it encountered furious opposition, in which Chatham took a leading part. We may regard it as a landmark in the history of toleration, and also in the history of imperial statesmanship; for it conforms to what has become the essential principle of the British as distinct from other empires—that unity is to be secured by a wide recognition of local diversities.

Probably, however, the main purpose of the authors of the Quebec Act was to secure the friendly neutrality of Canada during the American war, which was just about to begin. In this it was completely successful. At the same time it irritated the Puritanism of the old English colonists, and Congress declared itself "amazed that the British parliament should consent to establish in that country a religion that has deluged your island in blood." After this it is hardly surprising that, though the rebel armies twice invaded Canada, they failed to win any support from the French inhabitants.

After the end of the American war the arrival of the loyalists from the States introduced new problems. Most of these settled higher up the St. Lawrence valley, in what is now the province of Ontario. They required a different system of government from that which the Quebec Act had provided for the French, and in 1791 Pitt carried a Canada Act, which divided Canada into two distinct provinces,

Upper (or English) and Lower (or French) Canada, each with an elected Assembly, a Governor appointed in England, and a Council nominated by the Governor. This was, in fact, the system which had already failed in the old English colonies. However, it proved sufficient for the next forty-six years.

(iii) *The First Years of Pitts' Ministry* (1783-1791)

William Pitt the Younger, who became Prime Minister as the nominee of George III in the curious circumstances already described (see p. 366), was born in his father's "year of victories," 1759, and had been carefully trained from childhood for a statesman's career. He was only twenty-four when he became Prime Minister, but he had few of the merits or defects we associate with youthfulness. Owing to weak health and to his father's anxiety to supervise his education, he had been educated at home until he went up to Cambridge at the age of fifteen. He had shared but little in the sports and amusements of ordinary boys, and he was now already a wary and experienced politician. Some qualities he inherited from his father —scrupulous honesty, intense courage and self-confidence, and an excessively haughty demeanour as of one who was continually thanking God that he was not as other men. But he lacked his father's instinct for leading a great national movement; he excelled in endurance rather than in dash, and he would never have won the Seven Years' War in his father's fashion. His mother was a Grenville, and he combined with some of his father's gifts the careful, plodding, financial ability of the author of the Stamp Act. He was also —in this again unlike his father—a great master of the art of parliamentary tactics—as is amply proved by the length of his ministry; and his speeches, though they lacked the thrill of his father's oratory or the profound wisdom of Burke's, were perfectly suited to the requirements of practical politics. William Pitt

The elder Pitt was a great war minister; the younger Pitt

was a great "post-war" minister, and his best work was done in his earlier years, when England was recovering from the American War. His first care was for finance.

Financial Measures

The amount of revenue lost to the government, both by smuggling and by incompetence and dishonesty in the departments responsible for collecting the revenue, was simply enormous. Pitt drastically reduced import duties (*e.g.* the duty on tea was divided by ten), thereby discouraging smuggling, and increasing the volume of taxable trade; he also introduced an efficiency and honesty unknown before into the revenue collecting departments. One of his best measures (1786) was a Commercial Treaty with France which abolished all duties on trade between the two countries, except on a list of specified articles. The treaty was valuable as opening a new market to the industries which were now rapidly developing the use of machinery; it was equally valuable as an attempt to make friends with the old "national enemy." In reply to those who were prejudiced against any form of friendliness with France, Pitt said: "To suppose that any nation could be unalterably the enemy of another was weak and childish. It had no foundations in experience or history. It was a libel on the constitution of political societies, and supposed the existence of a diabolical malice in the original frame of man." Unhappily the French Revolution and the career of Napoleon were to postpone Pitt's hopes for a generation.

Pitt was, for several years, the only Commoner in his Cabinet. His colleagues were, for the most part, rather insignificant noblemen. But in the course of his ministry he gathered round himself a body of disciples who were to hold the chief posts in the government for twenty years after his own death, almost down to the eve of the Great Reform Bill of 1832. Of these the ablest were Castlereagh and Canning: others were William Grenville, foreign minister during the first part of the war with the French Revolution: Perceval, Prime Minister 1809–12, and Lord Liverpool, Prime Minister 1812–27.

All through the eighteenth century the House of Lords

had been dominated by the old Whig families. Pitt began the practice of distributing peerages with a lavish hand as a reward for wealth devoted to political service. Thus the House began to assume its modern character as an aristocracy of wealth and service rather than of birth.

The closest of Pitt's friends from the first was William Wilberforce. Wilberforce was a man of great political capacity and social charm, who turned aside from an ordinary political career to devote himself to the movement for securing the abolition of the Slave Trade. We talk glibly to-day of "the white man's burden" and of the benefits conferred by European civilisation, and by British civilisation in particular, upon the more backward peoples of the earth. It should always be remembered that on the other side of the account must be set the appalling wrongs of the Slave Trade. England did not begin it, but by reason of her leading position in commerce and her sea power she became the chief promoter of the traffic. The most valued prize secured by the victories of Marlborough was the monopoly of the Slave Trade with Spanish America. It is calculated that in the century preceding 1776, when Congress prohibited the trade with the rebellious English colonies, 3,000,000 negroes were carried by English traders from Africa to North and South America, and this total takes no account of the ten per cent, who died on the voyage and were thrown overboard, nor of the waste and destruction involved in the raids of the native slave-catchers who devastated Africa to provide "pieces"[1] for the English traders. But the trade continued and increased after 1776. In the ten years 1783–93 Liverpool, which was the centre of about half the world's Slave Trade, transported about 300,000 slaves and sold them for £15,000,000.

The Slave Trade

The Anti-Slavery movement, of which Wilberforce made himself the parliamentary champion, had its roots in religion, and was indirectly a product of the religious revival of Wesley and Whitefield. Its leaders were for the most part either Quakers or else "Evangelicals" attached to the Church

[1] This was the recognised term in the trade.

of England. The movement is the most conspicuous example of the new spirit of humanity and philanthropy that, since the latter part of the eighteenth century, has transformed our attitude towards every species of cruelty, whether to convicted criminals, to children, or to animals. John Howard's crusade for prison reform belongs to the same epoch, and we may find the same humanitarian motive among the worthier impulses that inspired the impeachment of Warren Hastings. The Anti-Slavery movement is also notable as the first successful attempt to organise continuous agitation through "Leagues" or "Societies" for the purpose of putting pressure upon the government. It had many successors, with diverse aims, such as the Anti-Corn Law League and the Woman Suffrage societies.

The arguments against the abolition of the Slave Trade were what we should expect:—We could not afford to abandon so lucrative an industry unless every other country would do the same: Liverpool would be ruined, etc. Pitt's attitude to the movement was very characteristic of him. He was himself in entire agreement with Wilberforce, and he made the most eloquent speeches in parliament on the subject. But, important as it was that the greatest iniquity of civilisation should be abolished, it was still more important that Mr. Pitt should remain Prime Minister, and not give place to Mr. Fox. He refused to take up abolition as a government measure, and to stake the life of his government on its enactment. Thus Bill after Bill was defeated by the energies of some of Pitt's chief colleagues and supporters. As soon as Pitt was dead, Fox abolished the Slave Trade (1807) so far as Great Britain was concerned. The abolition of slavery in the British Empire followed in 1833.

Parliamentary Reform

Pitt took the same line over parliamentary reform. He introduced a Bill for purchasing and extinguishing rotten boroughs in 1785. After its defeat he took no further steps, and, after the French Revolution had begun, he opposed the Reform Bills of the Whig leaders, Fox and Grey. Pitt might be called a liberal-minded Conservative: when his Conservative party was found not to

share his liberal notions, he preferred to abandon the liberal notions rather than to split the Conservative party. He was a reformer in intention, but he enacted very few of his reforms.

Pitt's work for India, for Canada and for Ireland is noticed in other chapters. Two small actions in distant regions of the world deserve mention for their remoter consequences. Captain Cook had recently called attention to the existence of Australia, and Lord Sydney (note the name), Pitt's Home Secretary, suggested that the convicts who had formerly been transported to America should be sent to Botany Bay. Cook had also been charting the Pacific coast of North America, and in 1790 Spain protested against the establishment of a British station at Nootka Sound, on the island subsequently called after Captain Vancouver, one of Cook's chief assistants and disciples. Pitt refused to give way and prepared to fight if necessary, thus securing the freedom of the Pacific coast in the future interests of both Canada and the United States.

Australia and Vancouver

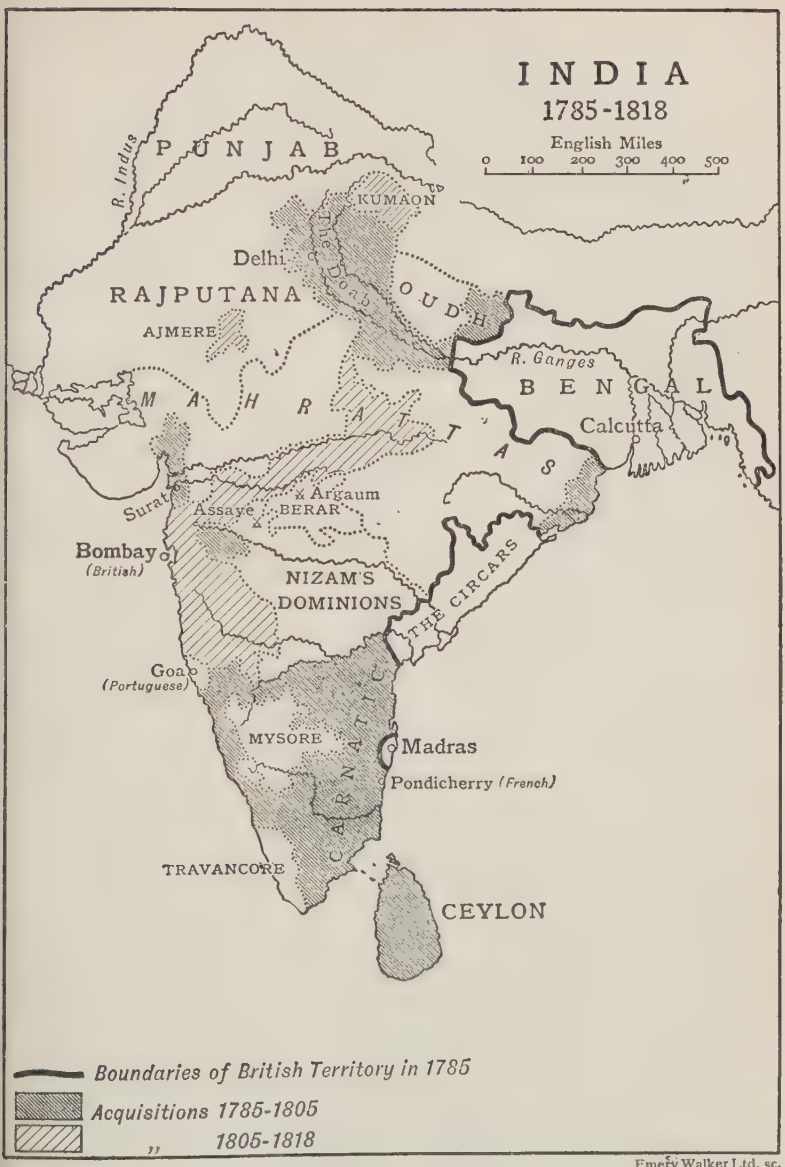
CHAPTER IV

INDIA

When George I came to the throne the East India Company had already been in existence for a hundred and fourteen years (founded 1600) and it had become a wealthy trading corporation; but the policy of its Directors had, as a rule, discouraged annexation of territory, and concentrated attention on trade. The greater part of India was under the rule of the powerful dynasty of Mohammedan invaders known as the Moguls. Our chief European rivals in trade had been the Dutch, but the "Indian wars" of Stuart times had not been fought with Sepoy armies (*i.e.* native armies under European officers) on Indian soil; they had been naval duels, fought mainly in the North Sea, to decide which of the two Powers should be mistress of the sea routes to the East.

Two events brought this period to an end. The first was the decay of the Mogul Empire, which became marked after 1680, when the Hindu Mahrattas of central and southern India rose against the tyranny of Aurangzebe. After the death of Aurangzebe in 1707 the Mogul power collapsed, and India became a scene of chaos much like Europe at the time of the collapse of the Roman Empire. All over the country ambitious adventurers, some of them natives and others Afghan invaders, were struggling to create new kingdoms. Such a chaos could only end in "the survival of the fittest"; but the fittest, as it turned out, were neither natives nor Afghans. The European trading companies, in mere self-defence and defence of their customers, found that they had to take a share in the struggle.

Decay of the Mogul Empire



Emery Walker Ltd. sc.

The second event was the decay of the Dutch and the rise of the French Company, which had been founded by Col-
The French in India bert, the great commercial minister of Louis XIV, in 1664. This Company established bases, or "factories," at Pondicherry near the English Madras, and at Chandernagore near the English Fort William (afterwards Calcutta). There was no French factory near Bombay, but they had a useful naval station in the island of Mauritius. We have already contrasted the French and English colonies in America: the English broadly based on a steady trade and a vigorous population, but lacking in imperialist ambitions; and the French, a mere handful in numbers yet scheming for a mighty empire. Much the same contrast might be drawn between the two Companies in India. The British Company was a genuine commercial concern, run by business men and sufficiently prosperous to make considerable loans to the government from time to time. The French Company, on the other hand, was from the first controlled—and frustrated—by the State. Its Directors were courtiers and nobles; it was never a commercial success, and was always in debt to the government, and when it embarked on conquest it did so not to protect its trade but because its trade was a failure.

In 1742 Walpole fell from power and England drifted into war with France over the Austrian succession. A very ambitious Frenchman named Dupleix had just been appointed Governor of Pondicherry. He realised more clearly than any European before him not only the weakness of native armies, however vast, against European discipline and fire-arms, but also the possibility of making really serviceable troops by arming and drilling the natives in the European manner, and putting them under European officers. Thus Dupleix was ahead of us in India as the French Governors of Canada were ahead of us on the Ohio. In fact the French captured Madras in 1746, though they had to restore it by the Treaty of Aix in 1748. But Dupleix was not himself a soldier, and he quarrelled both with La Bourdonnais, the Governor of Mauritius, and with Bussy,

the ablest French soldier in India. Moreover, the French lacked trade and sea power. If the English entered into serious competition with the French in India by Dupleix's methods, they were almost bound to win.

The English Company discovered a "heaven-born general," as Pitt afterwards called him, in young Robert Clive, who had come out to Madras as a clerk in the Company's service. War went on in India regardless of the peace established between England and France in Europe, and each Company supported a rival claimant to the position of Nawab of the Carnatic, the coastal plain in which both Madras and Pondicherry lay. In 1751 Clive captured Arcot, the Nawab's capital, and immediately afterwards defended its citadel for fifty days against the assaults of the French party. The unsurpassable gallantry and skill of these performances gave the British Company the military prestige which had hitherto belonged to the French. When the Seven Years' War began, Pitt assisted the Company with British ships and British regular troops, and the struggle between the Companies for predominance in Southern India was decided by the battle of Wandewash (1760), where Coote defeated Lally. By the Treaty of Paris the French were allowed to retain Pondicherry, but their Company was abolished a few years later.

The victories of Clive

Midway between the siege of Arcot and the battle of Wandewash, Clive had been despatched to Fort William. Suraj-ud-Dowlah, the successor of an Afghan adventurer who had usurped the government, had fallen upon the English community and perpetrated the atrocity of the Black Hole of Calcutta (1756), where 146 persons were locked up for the night in a small room, and only twenty-three survived. The amazing victory of Plassey, in the next year, was the most striking illustration of the efficiency of the new system of warfare. Nine hundred British soldiers and fifteen hundred Sepoys utterly defeated an Oriental army, if it may so be called, estimated at 50,000. The casualties of the victors were twenty-two killed. Suraj-ud-Dowlah was deposed, and his successor was a mere puppet

in the hands of the Company. Eight years later, in 1765, by treaty with the Mogul who still nominally ruled all India from Delhi, Clive secured for the Company the *diwani*, or financial administration, of Bengal, Behar and Orissa. Other departments of government still remained nominally in the sphere of the puppet Nawab of Bengal.

The victory of Plassey had placed one of the richest provinces of Asia entirely at the mercy of what was, after all, only a commercial concern. There followed, as was perhaps inevitable, a period of appalling extortion and corruption, which Clive proved unable to check, though he did his best to do so. Never before had Englishmen enjoyed such opportunities of getting rich quick, and English society was disgusted by the appearance in their midst of Anglo-Indian *nouveaux riches*, nicknamed "Nabobs," who outbid the great landlords themselves in the competition for rotten boroughs. The Directors were shocked by the stories that came home from India, and in 1772 appointed Warren Hastings as Governor of Bengal, with instructions to cleanse the Augean stables of Indian corruption.

The reforms of Warren Hastings

If Clive was "the heaven-born general" who opened for the British in India the road to empire, Hastings first taught them how to walk along it. He was, perhaps, the greatest man ever sent out from England to govern a province abroad. We cannot enter upon the complicated details of his career as an administrator. His great task, in which in the main he succeeded, was to teach the servants of the Company that their work now was not merely to trade, or to fight, much less to pillage, but to *govern*, and that government means the establishment of order and justice. For thirteen years (1772–1785) Hastings laboured at this task, but there was much to hamper him and distract his attention. The Directors at home gave him by no means a free hand, and in 1773 Lord North's government also intervened with a system of checks upon the Company and its officials. Furthermore, when France joined the American colonies in 1778, her agents stirred up native rulers in India, and

Hastings had to defend the Company's possessions against formidable enemies.

North's Regulating Act

North's Regulating Act of 1773 was a very important event, for it was the first great Act of Parliament dealing with India, the first important encroachment of the government upon the authority of the Company. Both Clive and Pitt, it may be noted, had realised that something of the kind was absolutely necessary. North's Act did not abolish the Company, as some recommended, but established a system of control over the Directors' policy. In India it established (i) a Supreme Court of Justice, with British judges independent of the Company, to hear cases of complaint against the Company's actions, and (ii) a Council of four members to control the policy of the Governor of Bengal (*i.e.* Hastings), who was henceforth Governor-General, with a somewhat ill-defined authority over the Governors of Madras and Bombay. Of these measures the first was altogether right and excellent, but the second was a mistake. North's government was quite right in establishing its control over the Directors in London, and it might well have taken the appointment of the Governor-General entirely into its own hands. But it is a sound principle of all government to trust "the man on the spot," and, if you don't trust him, to "sack" him and appoint someone else. The Council of four would in any case, perhaps, have proved an obstruction and a failure. Its powers for mischief were greatly increased by the fact that one of its members, Sir Philip Francis, was an utterly unscrupulous man who sought to advance his own career by constituting himself a "leader of opposition" in India. He thwarted Hastings again and again, and, when Hastings secured a majority on the Council, returned to England to prepare the ground for Hastings' impeachment.

The wars of Warren Hastings cover the years in which the British government and its generals lost the American colonies. Hastings, almost unaided and little regarded at home, saved the empire in India from the attacks of the Mahrattas on Bombay, and the attacks of Hyder Ali, the

Sultan of Mysore, upon the Carnatic and its British capital, Madras. One of the greatest of French admirals, Suffren, fought a series of battles in Indian waters against the British fleet under Admiral Hughes. The French had the cleverer admiral, but the British had the better captains and the better sailors.

When peace had been made with France and the American problem settled, there was a general agreement that another India Act was required, both to increase the control of the government over the Company at home and to strengthen the authority of the Governor-General in India. Fox's India Act was defeated in the remarkable manner already described (see p. 366), and in 1785 Pitt carried an India Act which settled the main lines of Indian government down to the time of the Mutiny of 1857. A Board of Control, consisting of members of the government, was established with powers superior to those of the Directors of the Company. Henceforth Governors-General were appointed by the government and not by the Company. Hastings resigned, and was succeeded by Lord Cornwallis, who was empowered, as Hastings had never been, to over-rule the Council that was appointed to advise him.

Pitt's India Act

Hastings ought to have received a peerage on his return home. Instead, the Whig leaders, Burke and Fox, demanded his impeachment, and Pitt somewhat weakly consented. The principal charges of the prosecutors were—(i) extortion of money from the Rajah of Benares and the Begums (Princesses) of Oudh; (ii) the lending of British troops for the extirpation of a tribe called the Rohillas, and (iii) the perversion of justice in securing the execution of a Bengali named Nuncomar. The House of Lords, who were certainly not prejudiced in Hastings' favour, ultimately acquitted him on all charges, but the trial lasted, owing to the dilatory nature of the proceedings, for seven years (1788–1795), and consumed the whole of Hastings' fortune. That Hastings should have been subjected to such an ordeal was a gross injustice. He

The impeachment of Hastings

was made a scapegoat for the sins of the "Nabobs," whose extortionate practices he had done more than any other man to suppress; and the prime instigator of the whole undertaking was his virulent enemy, Francis, who poisoned the minds of Burke and Fox against him. None the less, apart from the injustice to the accused, the impeachment should not be regretted. Burke and Fox were wrong on their facts but right in their intentions. They claimed to champion the rights of the down-trodden native peoples of India, and their action was the first great assertion of the principle that native peoples under British rule have a right to the best government that British rulers can given them.[1]

India during the Napoleonic wars

Fourteen years after Hastings' recall another cycle of wars and conquests began in India, once again provoked by warfare between England and France. Bonaparte dreamed of Oriental empire, and, at the time of his expedition to Egypt, entered into intrigues with Tippoo, the son of Hyder Ali of Mysore, and with the Mahratta chieftains. Lord Wellesley was now Governor-General. His commanders captured Seringapatam, the capital of Mysore, establishing a friendly rajah as ruler of that province (1799), and broke the power of the Mahrattas in a series of battles, which were the first military triumphs of his younger brother, the future Duke of Wellington. Wellington's victory at Assaye (1803) was far the most formidable battle the British had fought in India up to that date.

The British government welcomed neither Indian wars nor Indian conquests. After the wars of Warren Hastings, Cornwallis had been instructed to refrain from interventions or alliances outside the territories for which the British government was already responsible, and the same instructions were given to Wellesley's successor. The result, on both occasions, was unsatisfactory; British prestige declined,

[1] Macaulay's famous Essay on Warren Hastings is in many respects a noble vindication of Hastings, but on some of the points at issue, notably Nuncomar and the Rohillas, Macaulay was misled by the eloquence of Burke. Any modern history or biography will supply the necessary corrections.

and neighbours began to prove unneighbourly. For example, Wellesley himself was prevented from suppressing the Mahratta Confederacy, and the only result was that Mahratta bands continued to devastate the land of Indian peoples under our rule. At last, shortly after Waterloo, Lord Hastings (no relation of Warren Hastings) was allowed to destroy the Mahratta Confederacy and annex their territories to the Province of Bombay. Thenceforth all India, except the provinces of the Indus valley, was under British control; about half of it was British territory, and the remainder territory of native princes who accepted British predominance. A century and a half of anarchy had begun with the rebellion of the Mahrattas in 1680 against the declining power of the Mogul emperor; now the Mahratta power in its turn had been suppressed by the British, and India once again enjoyed comparative peace.

During the later stages of the Napoleonic war the East India Company acquired the great and densely populated island of Java, the centre of the Dutch East Indies. The island was abandoned at the end of the war, but the British Government retained Singapore, in order to prevent the Dutch from closing the Malacca Straits. The leading spirit in these ventures was Sir Stamford Raffles, who should also be remembered as the founder of "the Zoo."

CHAPTER V

SCOTLAND AND IRELAND

(i) *Scotland*

SCOTLAND at the time of the Act of Union (1707) was an exceedingly poor country; whereas the annual revenue of the government from England was £5,700,000 that from Scotland was only £160,000. Fletcher of Saltoun, a very intelligent and patriotic Scotsman, writing ten years earlier, gives an appalling picture of the poverty and barbarism of the country. The total population was probably barely a million, and he estimates that of these, 200,000 lived in beggary, vagabondage and crime. So desperate does the situation seem to him that the only remedy he can suggest is the introduction of slavery. Yet only seventy years later, in 1769, an English traveller in Scotland could write: "Very few beggars are seen; either the people are full masters of the lesson of being content with very little, or, what is more probable, they are possessed of a spirit that will struggle hard with necessity before it will bend to the asking of alms."

Scottish Progress

Seldom, in fact, has any country made such rapid progress in all directions as Scotland made in the eighteenth century. To this many causes contributed, but perhaps the most important of all was the establishment, by the Act of Union, of free trade with England and with the English colonies. The English Navigation Acts of the Commonwealth and Charles II had simply annihilated the Scottish shipping trade, but immediately after the Union it was reborn, and began to expand. It is interesting to find that Glasgow, to-day the second city of the Empire, having no vessels of its own, began by hiring ships for American trade from the now obscure little Cumbrian seaport of

The Act of Union

Whitehaven. The tonnage of Scottish vessels multiplied by four between 1735 and 1760.

From the time of John Knox to the Revolution of 1688 Scotland had been cursed by religious feuds, but an Act of 1689 recognised the Kirk as the established church of Scotland, and another Act of 1712 secured complete toleration for the minority who adhered to the Anglican Church. Even more important, perhaps, was another Act of the same period which provided for the establishment of a school in every parish. The Scottish reformers, to their great credit, had set this ideal before themselves long before, but the poverty and turbulence of the country had put many obstacles in their way. When Knox recommended diverting some of the endowments of the old Church to educational purposes, the Regent Murray had dismissed his scheme as a "devout imagination." Now the "devout imagination" was realised. The result was that the more unlovely aspects of Scottish Presbyterianism, its gloomy fanaticism and superstition, were gradually toned down. The Scots became, in the course of the next hundred years, the best educated nation in Europe. In the latter years of the century Scotland produced Hume, who was recognised all over Europe as one of the profoundest of philosophers; Adam Smith, whose *Wealth of Nations* revolutionised ideas of commercial policy; James Watt, the "melancholy mechanic" whose improvements in the steam engine transformed industry; Robert Burns the national poet; and Sir Walter Scott, who, by his poems and novels, did more perhaps than all other Scotsmen combined to teach Englishmen to admire the Scottish national character. What the typical Englishman thought of Scotsmen in the generation before Sir Walter we learn from the immortal work of another Scotsman, James Boswell, whose *Life of Johnson* is accepted on all hands as the best biography in the language. Johnson regarded the Scots as very "poor relations," and his Scottish biographer had the wit and the wisdom to make no concealment of the fact.

Education

At the beginning of the century the Highlanders were in

all essentials an entirely different nation from the Lowlanders. They spoke their own language, Gaelic, and their religion was still, in the main, a mixture of Popery and paganism. The chieftains of the clans exercised powers of life and death, and their country was in fact a "Heptarchy" within which the king's authority hardly penetrated. A Lowland writer remarked that down to 1745 the Highlanders were in exactly the condition of the Germans as described by Cæsar, in that robbery was a subject for pride rather than reproach, provided it was carried out at the expense of another clan. The most notable of these great barbarians was Robert Macgregor, known as Rob Roy, who for more than twenty years carried on his "business" on the very frontier of the Lowlands, only thirty miles from Glasgow, and died in his bed at the age of eighty, in 1736. This seems very picturesque to-day, but it did not appear so to the Lowland Scots of George I's reign. The Lowland Scot of those days loathed and despised the Highlander as a savage, and dreaded him as a dangerous savage.

The Highlands

It was the two Jacobite rebellions that convinced the government that the Highland nuisance must be brought to an end. Little enough was done after the "Fifteen," however, till, in 1726, Marshal Wade began making roads along which civilisation could penetrate. After the "Forty-five" Pelham abolished the authority of the chiefs in return for a money compensation; enforced the disarmament law, and forbade the wearing of the Highland tartans. Ten years later Pitt introduced a better policy by raising the Highland regiments, which enabled the splendid bravery of the mountaineers to find a happier and wider outlet.

"O where, and O where has your Highland laddie gone?"
"He's gone to fight the French for King George upon the throne."

In 1773 Boswell and Johnson made a tour of the Highlands and the nearer Hebrides, and each wrote a record of their adventures. They show us the Highlands in a state of rapid transition. Intercourse with a wider world is opening up; the chief is declining into a landlord; knives and forks and other impedimenta of civilisation are spreading over

the land; and population, no longer kept down by chronic violence, is overflowing to America. In another thirty years or so the old antagonism of the Lowlander and Highlander would be over, and the genius of the Lowlander Sir Walter Scott would teach each to be proud of the achievements of the other. The modern Englishman has so completely forgotten the old divisions of Scotland that he often thinks of the kilt as simply "Scotch," and Lowland caterers pack up Lowland shortbread in tartan-covered tins.

(ii) *Ireland*

Irish history is proverbially dismal, and the eighteenth century does not provide a happy exception to this rule. None the less the story is not uninteresting. Throughout the first three-quarters of the century the country was crushed beneath a load of evils; in the last quarter of the century, and as a direct consequence of the American rebellion, there was a vigorous effort to throw off the load and make a new beginning of better things. But the new beginning involved difficulties of its own, and had to be "scrapped" by the Act of Union (1800), which starts another dismal period lasting through most of the nineteenth century.

The "load of evils" may be sorted out under three headings: religious, commercial, constitutional.

Three-quarters of the population were Roman Catholics, and these included not merely the "native Irish" but the descendants of the earlier English settlers, who had themselves become Irish in religion as in all other respects. Yet Roman Catholicism was the traditional enemy of England ever since the Spanish Armada and Gunpowder Plot; and even though England might perhaps have ceased to fear, and consequently to persecute, the Irish Catholics, the small "Protestant garrison" of English-in-Ireland or Anglo-Irish could not afford to do so. After the defeat in Ireland of James II's attempt to regain his throne, William III had, by the Treaty of Limerick, promised toleration, but the Protestant Irish parliament

Religion

would not have it, and had torn up the treaty (1691). Henceforth Catholics not only were deprived of the right to vote, but were excluded from the magistracy, the bar, the army, and the navy. They were forbidden to inherit land, to keep schools, or to own a horse worth more than five pounds.

Besides the Anglo-Irish Protestants and the Irish Catholics, there was a third community, the Scots-Irish Presbyterians of Ulster. These were also deprived of the vote, but otherwise enjoyed toleration.

Trade

We have seen how, ever since the time of the Commonwealth, the English parliament had been building up a system of regulations, called the Mercantile System, for the benefit of English shipping and English industry. This had hampered the development of New England, but injuries suffered there were as nothing compared with the injuries the system inflicted on Ireland. Under Charles II all export from Ireland to England of cattle, sheep, pigs, meat, butter and cheese was forbidden. In the same reign Ireland was excluded from all trade with the colonies. Under William III Ireland was forbidden to export raw wool to any country but England, and also forbidden to export any woollen goods. These tyrannies need no comment, unless it be to point out that their weight fell on all alike, Protestant and Catholic. They fell heaviest of all on the Scots-Irish of Ulster, for these were the chief exporters. Hence Ulster, in more recent times the centre of loyalty to the English connection, was in the eighteenth century the centre of the bitterest hatred towards England: hence also a steady emigration of Ulstermen to America. It was these who provided the backbone of Washington's army (see p. 375).

The Irish Parliament

The Irish Protestant parliament, though free to tyrannise over the Catholics, was free in no other respect. It was bound by a multiplicity of chains. By Poynings' Law (1495), dating from Henry VII's reign, it was forbidden to debate any measure that had not first been approved by the English Privy Council. Further, it was a

parliament with no Cabinet dependent on its majority. The Irish government was in the hands of a Viceroy nominated by the English Prime Minister, and the Irish ministers were nominated by the Viceroy. Lastly, since the franchise was limited to Church of England Protestants, the great bulk of the constituencies were rotten boroughs, controlled by a small group of rich families, nicknamed the Undertakers because they undertook, in return for pensions and peerages, to provide majorities agreeable to the English government.

How, it may be asked, could such a system last? Because Ireland was divided. The Anglo-Irish Protestants could not protest against the commercial and constitutional evils because they themselves depended on England to maintain their ascendancy over the Irish Catholics. Again, the Scots-Irish Presbyterians, who suffered in some degree from the same religious tyranny as the Catholics, hated their fellow-victims quite as much as they hated their persecutors.

Such was the situation in Ireland down to the War of American Independence. In order to fight the American colonists, the government removed its army from Ireland to America. Then France declared war on England (1778), and the Ulster Irish raised volunteers to defend themselves against a possible French invasion. The Volunteer army grew with extraordinary rapidity, and enlisted Irishmen of all parties and creeds. In 1780 it stood at 100,000. Suddenly force, which had been on the side of England, had passed to the side of Ireland. The first-fruits of the new situation were, in 1778, the extension of the franchise to the Ulster Presbyterians. In 1780 the Volunteers paraded Dublin with their artillery, and the English government removed all the mercantile restrictions on Irish trade with the colonies. By 1782 Yorktown had fallen and the Whigs were in office, and among the Whigs was Burke, an Irish patriot, though he gave his life to the politics of a wider sphere. In that year the Irish Protestant parliament demanded, and the English parliament granted, the repeal of Poynings' Act, and of all later Acts which limited the powers of the Irish parliament. Henceforth and until the

The Irish Volunteers

Union (1782–1800) the Irish parliament was nominally equal with, and independent of, the parliament of England. It is known, during the period, as "Grattan's Parliament," from the name of the Irish leader who, with the menace of the Volunteers to back him, secured its independence.

Grattan's Parliament

But was Grattan's parliament free and independent? There was still the Viceroy nominated in England to carry out the policy of England, and there were still the rotten boroughs, controlled by Irish Protestant peers who were inclined to favour English interests. The rotten boroughs could never be abolished unless the bulk of the population, the Catholics, were given the vote. The Volunteers and the parliament were ready to relax the penal laws, but the majority of both were against "emancipation," as it was called, *i.e.* the granting of full political equality to the Catholics. Grattan favoured emancipation, though he held that the Protestant ascendancy must be maintained. How these two things were to be reconciled he never explained, and in fact they were incompatible. Grattan had proudly declared "Ireland is now a nation," but she was not: she was two nations, and the smaller still ruled the greater, and could only maintain its position by denying the other nation the vote.

The tariff controversy

There were other difficulties involved in the new position. Ireland now enjoyed the right of trading with the colonies and with foreign nations, but England had still a high tariff against Ireland. A member of the Irish parliament introduced a Bill to raise income by an Irish tariff on imports from England, but the Viceroy secured its defeat. In 1783 Pitt became Prime Minister. He was a disciple of Adam Smith's new doctrine of free trade, and sought (1785) to establish free trade between England and Ireland. But it was apparent that, if this scheme were accepted, Ireland must undertake to adopt the English scheme of tariffs against foreign imports. Otherwise foreign goods could avoid the English tariff by entering England *via* Ireland. Grattan saw that Pitt's scheme, though intended for the good of Ireland, meant removing from his parliament

the control of Irish tariffs, and he secured its defeat, denouncing it as "an insidious and creeping union."

Thus the triumphant mood of 1782 quickly faded into disillusionment, and there arose a new party that saw the salvation of Ireland in nothing less than the establishment of an Irish republic entirely independent of England. The French Revolution encouraged Irish republicanism, and in 1791 Wolfe Tone founded among the Ulster Presbyterians a society of "United Irishmen." Their aim was to join hands with the Catholics against England, and secure independence with the help of France, which was obviously likely to be soon involved in another war with England. In 1793 Pitt induced the Irish parliament to grant the vote to the Catholics in order to win them from alliance with the Ulster republicans, but as this Catholic Relief Bill did not enable Catholics to sit in the Irish parliament, it was a mockery rather than a boon; the Irish Catholics were to vote, but not to be allowed to vote for their own natural leaders. In 1795 the situation was made worse by a disastrous muddle. A new Viceroy, Fitzwilliam, promised a Bill allowing Catholics to sit in parliament, but he was immediately recalled and the promise withdrawn.

The "United Irishmen"

Meanwhile disorder was spreading over Ireland. The alliance between the Ulstermen and the Catholics proved of temporary duration. Ulstermen were Presbyterians and No-Popery men before they were republicans, and the United Irishmen gradually became an almost entirely Catholic association, while Ulstermen enrolled as Orangemen to defend themselves against the old enemy. In 1798 a Catholic rebellion broke out in Wexford and other counties of the south-east and was repressed at Vinegar Hill. It might have proved formidable if Hoche, a soldier of the French Revolution, had not been prevented by a storm from landing with an army of 15,000 men, in the previous year. But Bonaparte was now dominant in France, and preferred to attack Egypt instead of Ireland. Long afterwards in St. Helena he is said to have spoken of this as his most fatal mistake.

The Rebellion of 1798

Pitt had come to realise that Ireland would never be content until the Irish Catholics could not only vote but elect Catholics to represent them. Yet it was impossible, especially in the middle of the greatest war England had ever fought, to admit the Catholics to the Irish parliament. They would master it, and Ireland would, in effect, become an independent and hostile country. The prelude to Catholic emancipation must be an Union of the two parliaments. So, in 1800, an Act of Union was carried through both parliaments. In England it passed, of course, without difficulty, but in Ireland it was only carried by an unprecedented exercise of corruption. Yet the Irish parliament had always lived and moved in an atmosphere of corruption, as a parliament of Protestant rotten boroughs in a Catholic country was bound to do. Also, Pitt regarded the corruption, which carried the Union, as payment for the value of the boroughs extinguished by the Act; he had, in fact, many years earlier introduced an English Reform Bill, in which a money compensation to the owners of the extinguished boroughs was included.

The Irish Union

Then followed the final disaster. George III, influenced in part by mischievous members of Pitt's own Cabinet, refused to allow Catholic emancipation to be introduced; he held that it would be a breach of the oath he took at his coronation to maintain the Protestant religion. So Catholic emancipation was postponed, as it turned out, for twenty-nine years. When it came, it came as a result of violent pressure from Ireland, and thus the gift was accepted without gratitude. To many in Ireland the offer of Catholic emancipation had been considered part of a bargain implied in the Act of Union. The Scottish Union had brought the Scots the gift for free trade within the empire. The Irish had obtained this in 1780, and the boon now promised was withheld.

Pitt no doubt hoped that he might yet redeem his promise. He was still young: George III was old; and the French war would not go on for ever. But Pitt was to be in his grave long before either the death of George III or the battle of Waterloo.

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CHAPTER VI

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

(i) *The Revolution*

THE causes of the Revolution were many, but the fundamental cause may be summarised in a phrase—the survival of the remains of feudalism.

In France, as in all European countries, there had been a struggle of centuries between monarchy and feudalism, between the central authority and the local authorities. In all these struggles the difficulty of the task of the central authority was roughly proportionate to the size of the country and the excellence of its frontiers. In England, small and bounded by the sea nearly all the way round, the central government had a comparatively easy task and had asserted its authority early, under Henry II and Edward I; it triumphed finally under the Tudors. At the same time the local authorities learned to co-operate in parliament, and the struggles between king and parliament are not struggles between "centralism" and "localism," but between two different forms of centralised authority. In Germany, larger and less well defined than France, we have seen that the local authorities secured their independence, reducing the Emperor to a mere shadow-king outside his own Austrian and Bohemian territories.

The problem of central control

What happened in France was quite different from what happened in either England or Germany. Feudalism maintained its powers against the Crown until the beginning of the seventeenth century, the French Wars of Religion (in Elizabeth's reign) being in fact a kind of French "Wars of the Roses" with religious complications. Then the nettle was firmly grasped by Richelieu (1624–1642). The achievement of that ruthless and amazing man was somewhat as follows. He deprived the nobles of their

Richelieu

governmental duties, establishing in their place a system of middle-class provincial governors called *Intendants*, closely controlled by the central government; but he was not strong enough to deprive the nobles of their privileges, that is to say, of their exemptions from taxation by the central government, and their right to levy feudal dues within their fiefs, which they had enjoyed as a compensation for the duties they had performed. To put it simply, the essence of the feudal system was work—and pay. Richelieu took away the work, because it was the source of power; but he left the pay. "What had been a salary of activity was now a bribe to remain inactive."

After Richelieu came Louis XIV, who established a court of unprecedented dimensions and magnificence at Versailles. Richelieu had cut the ties of work and duty which bound the noble to his estates. Versailles acted as a magnet, and drew him away from them. The formidable baron became the harmless courtier, who got ever deeper into debt as the rent-roll of his estate, preyed upon by the bailiff he had placed in charge,[1] proved more and more inadequate to pay his Parisian tradesmen's bills. "Aristocracies," said an aristocrat[2] who lived through the Revolution, "progress from power, through privilege, to vanity." Nor was the lot of the unadventurous noble who stayed on his estates any better. He also was a parasite drawing dues from his neighbours for which he made, and could make, no return. He was nicknamed the *hobereau*, which the dictionary defined as "the smallest of the birds of prey."

The French and English nobles

At this time the English noble had lost all his feudal privileges, but he remained in the country, despising and distrusting a court which under the Stuarts he regarded as "Papist" and under their successors as first Dutch and then German. At the same time he eagerly sought unpaid work as a magistrate because it ministered to his sense of power and importance. We may

[1] From an eighteenth-century noble's will: "I leave my bailiff nothing, as he has been eighteen years in my service."

[2] Châteaubriand.

say then that the great noble of England remained on his estates, unprivileged, but active, powerful, and rich, whereas the great French noble left his estates, retained his privileges, but was idle, powerless and poor. In the upshot France swept away her aristocracy and became the pioneer of European *égalité* or democracy, whereas England remained essentially aristocratic in its social structure right through the nineteenth century.

In addition to the old nobility of France there was an immense body, estimated at a quarter of a million in a population of twenty millions, of "ennobled peoples" who had purchased exemptions from taxation from impoverished kings during the last century or so before the Revolution.

As for the people who were not ennobled, they had to pay the taxes which the nobles were excused as well as their own fair share. This was hard on them, and, since they could not pay enough, very inconvenient for the government, which was in financial difficulties all through the eighteenth century. Further, the government allowed itself to be robbed by selling the right of levying the taxes to speculators called Farmers-general. Voltaire, when asked to tell a story about robbers, began "There was once a farmer-general . . ." His audience required no more.

Financial troubles

The peasants fared worst of all. Serfdom, though still general in Germany and further east, had long disappeared in France as in England. The French peasants, whose laborious economy has been proverbial for centuries, had over large areas of France bought their own land. Indeed there were far more small farmer-landowners in France than in England, where the yeoman class had been decaying since Stuart times. But the land of the French peasant, though he owned it, was still part of a feudal demesne. The lord, though he sold the land, did not and could not sell his feudal rights over it. He still claimed tolls on the land, tolls on the crops, tolls for the upkeep of boundary marks, roads and bridges (which he did not upkeep). He had the right to own the only mill, the only baking-oven on the estate, and to charge for their use,

The Peasantry

to keep pigeons which fed on the peasant's grain, and to destroy the peasant's crops by hunting over his fields. And when the peasant had finished with the lord's bailiff, the agents of the Church would appear and claim tithe, only one-third of which went to the local *curé* (generally a useful and popular character), the remainder going to swell the revenues of bishoprics and abbacies, which were almost entirely reserved for younger sons of great nobles who made no pretence of discharging the duties of their offices.

And feudal privilege was not fading away: in the years immediately before the Revolution, its enforcement was becoming stricter and stricter. The prime purpose of the Revolution was to sweep away feudal privilege. One may even say that the only reason why it swept away so much else as well was that feudal privilege was inextricably intertwined with so many other institutions of old France.

And now for the other side of the picture. While the *law* of French society was a debris of mediæval institutions which had lost their original meaning and justification, the *spirit* of French society, in the upper "modern" classes, had become extraordinarily modern. Foreign visitors agreed that the French upper classes were the most intelligent and delightful in the world; and the frontiers of this upper class was not fixed by feudal law. It excluded large numbers of the "nobles"—the *hobereau* class for example—and included many of the *bourgeoisie*. It was the class that read books and discussed them, that glorified "reason" and revelled in "wit." It was "Paris" as popularly understood, the Paris of the *salons*, where great ladies presided, and lords and ladies alike flattered the vanity of successful authors.

The "modern" spirit

These authors are known as *philosophes*, but we should not think of them as solemn and profound academic philosophers. They wrote plays, poems, short stories and innumerable pamphlets: their nearest modern English equivalents would be writers like Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells. But, owing to the entire absence of healthy

The "philosophes"

political life, where policy is publicly debated by practical politicians, these brilliant irresponsible literary men were accepted as oracles of political wisdom. There were many schools of *philosophes* and much disagreement among them, but on one point they were all agreed, that the existing social system was totally absurd. What should take its place was a much more difficult and less amusing subject. None of them desired revolution; very few of them approved anything such as we should call democracy: most of them toyed with the notion of a philosopher king, an enlightened despot. Meanwhile it was great fun to ridicule things as they were.

Four names may be mentioned. Montesquieu (1689–1755) ridiculed French society in the *Lettres persanes*, letters of two imaginary Persians travelling in France; in a more serious work, *L'Esprit des Lois*, he upheld the merits of the English aristocratic-parliamentary system. Voltaire (1694–1778), a great wit and a great philanthropist, assailed the Church as the chief enemy of freedom of thought; for the Edict of Nantes had been repealed (1685), and the French Church still persecuted as much as it dared; moreover it annoyed the *philosophes* by the control it exercised, through the government, over the censorship of books. Many of the most important French books of this period were published in Holland, to avoid the French censorship. Diderot (1713–1784) produced, with many collaborators, a great Encyclopædia, in which criticism of existing institutions was ingeniously intermingled with ordinary information.

Very different from any of these writers, and more important as an influence on the minds of large masses of men, was

Rousseau

Jean Jaques Rousseau (1712–1778). "Voltaire," said a contemporary, "seduced our intellects: Rousseau touched our hearts." With extraordinary eloquence Rousseau depicted existing civilisation as a vast conspiracy of the rich to rob the poor of their "Natural Rights." "What is the origin of inequality?" he asks; and answers: In the beginning men were equal and happy. Then came the beginnings of civilisation, and with it "private property," which is nothing but legalised robbery. Governments were formed to "keep things as they are," to protect

the rich against the poor. So we started on wrong lines, and have gone on ever since, repairing and patching, instead of which we should scrap our civilisation as a fraud and a failure and *make a fresh start!* As Voltaire truly said, this was a Code of Anarchy. Rousseau summed up his teaching in a book called *The Social Contract* (1761), which opens with the words "Man was born free: he is now everywhere in chains." The gist of it is that the only true Sovereign is the People, and that all governments are merely servants of that Sovereign, who is at all times entitled to "dismiss" them if they prove unsatisfactory.

In 1774 Louis XVI came to the throne. He was a kind-hearted young man, but his attempts at reform had little result except to increase the general unrest, and the renewal of war with England on behalf of our rebellious American colonies hastened his government along the road to bankruptcy. As a measure of desperation the ancient French parliament, the Estates General, was summoned to meet in May 1789, after an interval of a hundred and seventy-five years. This parliament consisted of three Houses or Estates, clergy, nobles, and the "Third Estate" of the commons. The relations of these Estates to one another was a matter of dispute, and in June the Third Estate declared itself the National Assembly, and declared that nothing but force should dissolve it. A month later the Parisian mob sacked the prison-fortress of the Bastille, and the Assembly proceeded to abolish all forms of feudal privilege. In October, the Parisian mob again intervened and compelled the king and queen to move from Versailles to Paris. The Assembly followed them; henceforth both crown and parliament were at the mercy of the mob. The Revolution was fairly launched on its wild career.

Outbreak of the Revolution

In the Assembly there were many who realised the dangers ahead. Among these was a radical-minded nobleman named Mirabeau, who sought to terminate the Revolution by establishing a constitutional monarchy on the English model. Unfortunately neither the king nor the Assembly trusted him, and the

War with Austria and Prussia

Assembly embarked upon wholesale reforms of the Catholic Church which fatally alienated Louis XVI, who was a very religious man. Mirabeau died in April 1791, and in June the king and queen made an unsuccessful attempt to follow the leaders of the nobility into Germany. They were arrested at Varennes, and brought back to Paris, prisoners in all but name. In the spring of 1792 the Assembly was dissolved and new elections provided another Assembly more radical-minded than the first, dominated by a group of inexperienced orators known as the Girondins. These were determined to carry the gospel of the Revolution beyond the frontiers of France and compelled the puppet-king to declare war upon Austria and Prussia. The French army was completely disorganised, and the Austrian and Prussian armies invaded France.

Fall of the Monarchy

Louis XVI and his queen, Maria Antoinette, herself an Austrian, were now in a terrible position, and very naturally they desired the success of the invasion which would rescue them from the clutches of revolutionary Paris. They were, in fact, forced into the position of being traitors to the country which they still nominally ruled. In August the inevitable end came. The royal palace was sacked, the monarchy abolished, and the royal family imprisoned. The unpractical Girondins gave place to the Jacobin faction, led by Danton and Robespierre. Louis XVI was put on trial before the Convention, the third parliament of the Revolution, and executed. But before this the Prussians and Austrians had been driven from French territory, and French armies invaded what we now call Belgium, then the Austrian Netherlands. This invasion was followed by war with England; we must now, therefore, retrace our steps and see how the French Revolution appeared to contemporary English eyes.

English opinion

The early stages of the Revolution awoke no alarm in England. It seemed that France was merely establishing a parliamentary government, and Englishmen in general were pleased to recall that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery; they were also pleased to see their

old enemies, the Bourbons, in difficulties. The bankruptcy which caused the summoning of the Estates General had itself been due to the expenses incurred by France in her malicious attack upon England in alliance with the American rebels; she was justly punished for her malice. But these easy and superficial comments were forgotten as the true scope of the Revolution gradually revealed itself. Here was something quite new, a movement to destroy the old order of civilisation based on aristocracy and to create a new civilisation based upon democracy or the equal rights of all men. The first man outside France to realise and make known to the world its full significance was Burke, whose *Reflections on the French Revolution* were published at the end of 1790.

Edmund Burke occupies a unique position in British history. He never sat in a Cabinet, and he made but few contributions to practical policy or legislation, apart from his Economical Reform Act of 1782. His speeches wearied the House of Commons, and in truth they were generally too long, and wandered far from the practical business of the moment. Moreover, on many of the main issues of the day Burke is now admitted to have been wrong. He defended rotten boroughs: his American policy overlooked the fact that the Colonists would no longer accept the Mercantile System: his charges against Warren Hastings were disproved: and his *Reflections* displayed great ignorance of the antecedents of the French Revolution. None the less, Burke has become the oracle of British Conservatism,[1] because he states again and again, more profoundly than any other political thinker, the essential bases of the Conservative philosophy. "Talk not to me,"[2] says the Conservative oracle, "of theories which prove by infallible logic how happy man would be if only his affairs were organ-

Edmund Burke

[1] Conservatism here means (and always should mean) not blind opposition to all change, but opposition to violent and sudden changes, especially when they are the outcome not of practical needs but of abstract theories of "natural right." Burke was no friend of tyranny, but he preferred even tyranny to revolution.

[2] This is not a quotation from Burke, but an attempt to put his philosophy into a tabloid.

ised on an entirely new pattern. Man is not a logical animal. The present social and political system is, no doubt, in many respects apparently absurd, but it is the product of past experience, and it *works;* who can guarantee as much for any other system that has not been tried? Old institutions, like old boots, are more comfortable than new ones, even of the cleverest workmanship, can possibly be; for they have been shaped not by artifice but by use. All they need is careful preservation and repair."

Much of what Burke said about the French Revolution was wrong, but the essentials of his thought may be set out as follows. "The French Revolution is an attack on property and lawful privilege: it is therefore an attack on security; and so, on civilisation. It will abolish monarchy, and it will try to destroy religion. Mob anarchy will lead to military despotism, and will declare war on all Europe. That war will be a war to the death. There is not, in the long run, room in the same civilised world for two such antagonistic systems side by side as the old system of monarchy and aristocracy, and the new system of republicanism and equal rights." Now only a man of extraordinary intellectual power could have said that in 1790 and the years immediately following. To-day democratic revolutions are about as common as earthquakes, and we understand their general character. The French Revolution was the first of its species in Europe, and yet Burke understood it. The war to the death which he foretold has lasted ever since, and, though much of it remains to come, its general results are already plain. Burke's party has been defeated. The Kaisers have all fallen, rotten boroughs have been abolished, real or sham elective bodies cover the earth with their activities, and such tyrants as there may be owe their position to force or fraud or merit, but certainly not to any hereditary right.

Tom Paine

Burke was answered by Tom Paine, whose pamphlet *The Rights of Man* circulated by tens of thousands in working-class homes. An estimate of the influence of this pamphlet would come at or near the beginning of any history of British Labour "unrest." But most of the

readers of Tom Paine had no votes. The cause of the French Revolution found, however, another champion in the highest circles of British politics in the person of Charles James Fox.

The lifelong antagonism of Pitt and Fox is as famous as that of Gladstone and Disraeli in a later generation, and in both cases the purely political rivalry was sharpened by a fundamental antagonism of character. Fox was ten years older than Pitt, and he was the son of the worst, as Pitt was the son of the best, of the politicians of the preceding generation. The elder Fox was a very able man who had cared for nothing but making a fortune out of political corruption, and he had, with shocking deliberation, encouraged his brilliant son to indulge himself in every form of fashionable vice. The great Charles James was a gambler and a debauchee from his youth upwards, and the evil influence he exercised over the morals of the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, was the best of the many reasons why George III hated him as he hated no other Englishman. Yet Fox was the kindest, most generous and lovable of men, and he won the affection of many, such as Burke, who were themselves men of stainless private life. His political career was a brilliant failure. It is one of the great misfortunes of our political history that he did not ally himself with Pitt, for they were in essential agreement on most subjects, and Fox's ardour for great causes and his wide knowledge of human nature would have supplemented Pitt's steady prudence and parliamentary tact. Instead, he wrecked his career and the fortunes of his party by his suicidal coalition with North (see p. 366). Thereafter he never held office for twenty-three years, till Pitt was dead and he himself was dying.

Charles James Fox

Fox refused to be frightened by the French Revolution. He held that in the main its cause was right, and that anyhow intelligent Englishmen ought not to be cowed by French excesses into abandoning the cause of parliamentary reform. Thus when England went to war with the Revolution, the Whig party split in two. The larger part followed Burke and gave their support to

The schism of the Whigs

Pitt's government: the smaller part followed Fox and opposed both the war with France and the measures taken to suppress the new doctrines at home. The chief of Fox's supporters was Grey, who long afterwards (1832) presided over the Government which carried the great Reform Bill. Fox's greatest service to British politics lay in this, that he prevented British parties from dividing themselves at this juncture into rich *versus* poor. He secured that there should be a remnant of the old governing class who stood for the new political ideas. But even so he was in many ways a bad leader. He seems to have been entirely devoid of the instinct of patriotism. No doubt those who think that their country has entered on an unjust war are placed in a very difficult position, but few of them would openly rejoice in the defeats of their country, as Fox did both during the American and during the French Revolutionary war.

Pitt had no sympathy with Burke's appeal for a general crusade against the French Revolution: he wanted to keep his country at peace with all the world. But the Jacobin government left him no choice in the matter. France was already (1792) at war with Austria and Prussia, and in the autumn of that year overran the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium). Such an act was not only a breach of the Treaty of Utrecht, but a defiance of principle of British foreign policy from the days of Edward III to 1914. Pitt declared war (January 1793) not on "the French Revolution" but on France as the breaker of an essential treaty, but English people thought more of the recent "September massacres" in Paris, and the execution of Louis XIV. They entered on the war more in the spirit of Burke than of Pitt.

Beginning of War with France

(ii) *The Revolutionary War* (1793–1802)

When the war began, both the army and the navy were in a bad state. Pitt, believing to the last that his own peaceable intentions could preserve his country from war, had economised on the forces throughout the ten years' peace. The pay in both services was scandalously

The army and navy

low. In the army, where enlistment was voluntary and desertion easy, the result was depleted ranks; in the navy, where enlistment was by press-gang and desertion more difficult, the result was discontent, which finally expressed itself in the mutiny at Spithead in 1797, at a moment when invasion was for the first time imminent. As a result of the mutiny the pay in both services was raised.[1] About this date competent professional administrators were placed in control of the Admiralty and the War Office—Lord St. Vincent, the winner of the battle from which he took his title, and the Duke of York, son of George III, who, though a bad commander in the field, proved an excellent organiser at home. None the less our armies, till Castlereagh went to the War Office in 1807, were very inadequate both in size and training.

Even a good army will accomplish nothing unless it is directed to the right objectives, and here also Pitt failed lamentably. The right objective was Paris, the centre of disturbance, and our best allies in the early years would have been not the half-hearted governments of Austria and Prussia, which were more intent on dismembering Poland than defeating France, but the heroic royalist and Catholic French rebels of *La Vendée*, in Normandy and Brittany. Pitt, however, preferred futile little expeditions to Holland and Belgium. His main military effort was the conquest of the French and Spanish West Indies, which did not affect the result of the war at all. Ill-fated British armies conquered these islands, occupied them, and died in them as the result of the climate. By 1796 the losses here were 40,000 dead, a larger figure than the total casualties from death, desertion and discharge in the six years of the Peninsular War. Pitt retained the country's confidence to the last, and he wore himself out in her service, but his government, on the military side, was an entire failure.

[1] Another mutiny took place at the Nore, when the mutineers (largely Irish) demanded "democratic control" of the movements of ships, and suchlike absurdities. The ringleaders were hanged. Their demands were similar to those that completed the ruin of the Russian armies in 1917.

Equally deplorable was Pitt's conduct of domestic affairs. The number of "Jacobins" in England and Scotland, who desired to enact a "French Revolution" on this side of the Channel, was quite infinitesimally small,

Repression of opinion

but there was a large body of the middle classes (mainly Dissenters) and working classes who desired a radical extension of the parliamentary vote. There is no reason to think that such a reform of parliament would have produced a parliament opposed to the war. Pitt, and not Fox, had the country behind him. Yet Pitt chose to regard the agitators for "representative government" as traitors. Repressive laws were passed making public meetings illegal unless advertised in advance, and extending the law of treason to including the writing, speaking, or preaching of any words against the king's authority. Some of the trials that followed were the most disgraceful examples of legalised injustice since the days of Judge Jeffreys; their victims were sentenced to long periods of transportation. Some of these men were misguided and violent enthusiasts, others were highly intelligent reformers, as patriotic according to their own lights as Pitt was according to his. In his horror of the new democratic teaching Pitt had made himself the leader of the "Die-hards" of aristocracy, who held that "the people have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them." Trade Unions were rendered illegal conspiracies by the Combination Act of 1799, not only because employers sought to keep down wages, but also because all forms of working-class co-operation were regarded as a dangerous menace to the British constitution.

Our only great achievement in these eight years of warfare was the succession of naval victories, most of them

The naval victories

associated with the immortal name of Nelson. Command of the sea enabled us to defend our coasts from invasion, but it did not, and could not, destroy the power of the Revolution on the Continent. In France the Jacobins, having seized power, secured it by the suppression of every vestige of political liberty. 1794, the year of our naval victory in the Channel, called the Battle of the First of June, was also the year of the Reign of

Terror. In 1795 Prussia made peace with France, and a new Republican constitution in France, called the Directory, was merely a new version of Jacobin tyranny. In 1796 a young French general aged twenty-seven and named Bonaparte astounded the world by his brilliant campaign in northern Italy: Austria, defeated at Lodi, at Arcola, at Rivoli, was driven to make peace early in the following year. All Italy fell under French control. In 1797 France was at war with England alone, and had compelled Spain and Holland to join her. Rebellion was about to break out in Ireland; it was also the year of the naval mutinies. All things considered, it was perhaps the most alarming year in our history between 1588 and 1917, between the Spanish Armada and the German U-boat offensive. However, the navy saved the situation. Jervis and Nelson defeated the French and Spanish fleets at Cape St. Vincent, and Duncan defeated the Dutch at Camperdown.

Bonaparte had little faith in the possibility of direct attack upon the British Isles, and in 1798 he secured the command of an expedition to Egypt. Here he carried all before him, capturing Alexandria and Cairo and winning the battle of the Pyramids, but he had given the British government an opening for a splendid counter-offensive, and for the first time in the war they seized their opportunity. Nelson and his squadron were detached from Lord St. Vincent's fleet in the Atlantic, and sent in pursuit of the French expedition. They came within an ace of meeting it on its outward voyage, and if they had, it is likely enough that Bonaparte himself and the bulk of his army would have gone to the bottom. The actual achievement was only less decisive. Nelson found the French fleet at anchor in Aboukir Bay a month after the army had landed. Trusting the skilled navigation of his captains he sent half his ships inside the French line, while the remainder attacked them from the seaward side. Taken between two fires the French fleet was almost entirely destroyed. Henceforth the French expedition was a "castle in the air." Bonaparte advanced into Syria but failed to capture Acre, owing

Battle of the Nile

to the skill and gallantry of an English naval captain, Sir Sidney Smith. He then returned to France without his army, the remainder of which was forced to capitulate to a British force under Sir Ralph Abercrombie in 1801. The only permanent result of Bonaparte's expedition was the curious sympathy established from that day forward between France and Egypt. When the nineteenth-century Khedives of Egypt, before the British occupation of 1882, sought guidance and instruction in the ways of civilisation, they always sought it from France.

Bonaparte's Egyptian expedition proved a failure, but it is interesting because it points towards the career he would perhaps have preferred to all others. "This old Europe bores me," he is reported to have said. He may have realised that conquests in Europe, beyond frontiers France had already achieved, could not be permanent, and he may even have guessed the immense extension of European control over Asia and Africa that the nineteenth century had in store. Only forty years before, Britain had ousted France from North America and India. Could not that verdict be reversed? It is interesting to find that, some years after the failure in Egypt, Napoleon, now master of France, sent a general to reconnoitre the situation in India; sent a nominally scientific expedition to explore the coast of Australia; and entered on negotiations with Spain for the cession of the vast province of Louisiana, beyond the Mississippi. But these things were impossible without sea-power, and Napoleon never seriously tackled the perhaps impossible task of giving France a navy that would equal her armies and eclipse the navy of Great Britain. So, having secured Louisiana, he sold it, in 1803, to the United States.

While Bonaparte was in Egypt, Austria re-entered the war, supported by Russia, and the Allied armies drove the French out of Italy. It was natural, therefore, that the French should overlook the Egyptian fiasco and welcome home the greatest of their generals as the one man who could save the country from

Bonaparte First Consul

the horrors of another foreign invasion. The Jacobin tyranny had reduced the whole country to a state of appalling confusion. Only a soldier could seize power; only a statesman could use it. Bonaparte was the greatest of soldiers, and was soon to prove himself a born ruler of men. the greatest of enlightened despots. Before the end of 1799 the Jacobin Directory was overthrown and Bonaparte established as master of France with the title of First Consul. His work was to bring the Revolution to an end, to organise what was good in it and to discard the rest. Rival factions were conciliated, exiles restored, administration reorganised. The Catholic Church re-established by means of a treaty, called Concordat, with the Pope. Two brilliant victories over Austria, Bonaparte's victory of Marengo in Italy and Moreau's victory of Hohenlinden in Bavaria, restored the military situation. Austria made peace (treaty of Lunéville, 1801) and France recovered northern Italy. It remained to deal with England.

Since the Battle of the Nile England had been involved in war with other enemies besides France. In all great wars the belligerent that controls the seas is apt to be involved in quarrels with neutral powers whose trade with her enemies she feels bound to curtail. Twenty years earlier, during the war with the American colonies, Russia and the Scandinavian states had formed a league of "Armed Neutrality" to resist by force the interference of British ships with their commerce. In 1800 this league was renewed. War followed, and Nelson achieved his remarkable victory over the Danish fleet and forts at Copenhagen (1801). It was on this occasion that he applied the telescope to his blind eye and thus refrained from seeing the signal of Parker, the commander-in-chief in charge of the reserve, who ordered him to cease fire half-way through the battle. Whether Nelson's victory would by itself have ended this war must remain uncertain, for a week earlier the Tsar Paul, who had other grounds of quarrel with England, was murdered, and his successor, Alexander I, at once opened negotiations for peace. In the later stages of the Napoleonic

The Armed Neutrality

war similar causes involved Britain in a war with the United States. In the Great War also, British treatment of neutral trade involved serious differences with America. Fortunately German submarines gave the Americans still more serious cause for offence.

In the same year as the treaty of Lunéville and the battle of Copenhagen Pitt's long ministry came to an end. He was succeeded by Addington, who prepared, with Pitt's approval, to accept Bonaparte's proposals of peace. It did not seem reasonable to continue fighting for the restoration of stolen European properties, when the owners of those properties themselves had made peace with the robber power. By the Treaty of Amiens (1802) Great Britain undertook to restore all the conquests of her navy except Ceylon and Trinidad; and these had not been French, but respectively Dutch and Spanish possessions. It was also understood that we should restore Malta to its previous owners, the Knights of St. John. Thus the greatest of modern soldiers had established peace throughout Europe within two years of his assumption of power.

For Great Britain the war had been a failure; we only overlook that failure to-day because it was cast into the shade by the magnificent and finally victorious efforts of the greater war which immediately followed. The war which was ended by the Treaty of Amiens proved that a series of naval victories, though they will save an island kingdom from disaster, will not lead it to victory without the co-operation of an adequate army, intelligently employed.

Treaty of Amiens

CHAPTER VII

THE NAPOLEONIC WAR (1803–1815)

(i) *The Napoleonic Empire* (1803–1808)

The Treaty of Amiens proved to be no more than a brief truce. Napoleon proceeded to invade Switzerland, to annex Piedmont, and to fortify Antwerp as a naval base obviously directed against England; he also published an official report on Egypt which indicated that he had further designs upon the East. Thereupon Great Britain refused to surrender Malta: Napoleon insulted the British ambassador in Paris, and the British government declared war (1803). In the next year Pitt returned to his old office.

The projected invasion of England

Being at war with no continental enemy, Napoleon, who in 1804 assumed the title of Emperor of the French, was free to develop his scheme for the invasion of England. It was a simple matter to mass a great army around Boulogne, and to prepare a flotilla of large flat-bottomed barges to transport the army; the problem was to secure, even for a few days, the naval control of the Channel, without which the whole undertaking was impossible. Napoleon had his main fleets at Toulon and Brest, and minor fleets at Carthagena, Cadiz, Corunna (for Spain had been induced to join him), and Rochefort. These were blockaded by British fleets policing the open seas—Nelson off Toulon and Cornwallis off Brest, and others at the other points. The French plan was that these fleets should escape one by one (for prolonged effective blockade by sailing ships was an extremely difficult undertaking) and each make for a secret *rendezvous* in the West Indies, whence they should return in force and secure the Channel. The plan was essentially unworkable. It assumed that, when the French squadrons

escaped, the corresponding British contingents would wander over the oceans in futile search for them; but the British contingents, other than Nelson's, were under orders to return immediately to the main fleet in the Channel. Moreover, the plan took no account of the British North Sea fleet which could in any case have smashed Napoleon's transports. There was sound sense in Lord St. Vincent's rebuke to alarmists in the House of Lords: "I do not say that the French cannot come. I only say that they cannot come *by sea*."

Early in 1805 the Rochefort squadron escaped; then the Toulon fleet and the Cadiz squadron. Nelson guessed that they had made for the West Indies and pursued them thither. It was sheer bad luck that he did not find them and destroy them. When they started back for Europe ahead of him, he sent his swiftest frigate to warn the Admiralty. The Admiralty proceeded to strengthen Calder, their commander off Corunna, and Calder met the returning French and Spanish fleet and repulsed it at the battle of Ferrol or Cape Finisterre (July 22). Villeneuve, the French Admiral, withdrew to Cadiz. Meanwhile Pitt, who had returned to power in England, had secured the formation of the Third Coalition; Austria and Russia declared war on France, and an Austrian army advanced across Bavaria. On August 23 Napoleon broke up the camp of Boulogne and marched his army across France to meet the Austrians and Russians. Some historians have suggested that Napoleon deliberately provoked the war with Austria and Russia in order to secure a dignified escape from his situation at Boulogne, which was in danger of becoming ridiculous.

The battle of Trafalgar, in which Nelson and Collingwood destroyed the Franco-Spanish fleet, came two months after Napoleon had left Boulogne and does not therefore, strictly speaking, belong to the story of the attempted invasion. It is rather to be regarded as the final and decisive demonstration of the fact that British supremacy at sea was unshakable.

Four months sufficed for the complete defeat of Austria. Mack with the army in Bavaria was surrounded and compelled to capitulate at Ulm. Napoleon occupied Vienna, crossed the Danube, advanced into Moravia, and defeated a combination of Austrians and Russians at Austerlitz. By the Treaty of Pressburg, December 1805, Austria surrendered all her territory in Italy and Western Germany. The Holy Roman Empire was abolished, and most of the states of Western Germany, including Bavaria, were formed into a Confederation of the Rhine, dependent upon Napoleon.

Austerlitz

Pitt died shortly after receiving the news of Austerlitz; he had shown superb confidence in the ultimate victory of his country, and had thus set a noble example. But he possessed hardly any other of the qualities necessary to a successful minister in times of war. He was succeeded by a short-lived and unsuccessful coalition of Whigs and Tories nicknamed the Ministry of All the Talents.

Before 1806 was far advanced Napoleon had goaded Prussia into war by a series of tricks and insults. Prussia appealed to Russia, still at war with Napoleon, but long before Russian help could arrive the Prussian armies had been completely defeated at Jena and Auerstädt (October 1806), whereupon the great Prussian fortresses, which might have held out for months, surrendered one after another with disgraceful rapidity. Napoleon would offer the Prussian government no terms of peace short of a virtual extinction of the Prussian kingdom, so the war dragged on, shifting its centre from the Elbe to the Vistula. In February 1807 the Russians under Bennigsen offered Napoleon at Eylau the stiffest resistance he had yet encountered, but in June Napoleon's superior skill lured Bennigsen into a trap and decisively defeated him at Friedland. The Tsar Alexander was weary of the war, which seemed to involve no real Russian interests, and he sought an interview with Napoleon which led to the famous Treaty of Tilsit (July 1807).

Jena, Friendland, and Tilsit

In the previous November Napoleon had issued from

Berlin his famous Decree prohibiting the inhabitants of the entire territory included in, or allied with, his empire from carrying on any commerce with Great Britain or admitting any goods that had been produced in Great Britain or its colonies. By the Treaty of Tilsit both Russia and Prussia —now permitted to make peace since its territory was no longer required for the campaign against Russia—undertook to accept the policy of the Berlin Decree. Prussia lost her territories west of the Elbe and the provinces gained in the second and third partitions of Poland. The former went, with Hanover, to form a kingdom of Westphalia for Napoleon's brother Jerome, and the latter to form a Grand Duchy of Warsaw under Napoleon's ally, the king of Saxony. In secret articles of alliance Russia undertook to join France in the war against Britain. It was agreed that Russia should be free to annex Finland from Sweden and the Danubian Provinces (now Roumania) from Turkey: and that Napoleon should similarly be free to deal as he pleased with Denmark, Portugal and Spain. Europe, in fact—with the exception of Prussia which was entirely at Napoleon's mercy, and Austria which had only one seaport, namely Trieste—was to consist of two vast empires, ranged in alliance against Britain.

It remained to snap up the remnants, beginning with Denmark; but this proved less simple than Napoleon expected. The Ministry of All the Talents had fallen, and Great Britain at last had a government which understood the conduct of war. Portland, the Prime Minister was a nonentity, but Canning was at the Foreign Office and Castlereagh at the War Office. Canning somehow obtained information of the secret articles of Tilsit, and at once summoned the Danish government to hand over its navy to Great Britain until the end of the war. The Danes refused, and Copenhagen was bombarded until they gave way (September 1807). This was very smart work, but historians doubt if it was worth while. The Danish fleet was a small prize for which to undertake an outrageous assault upon a neutral state, an assault which

Denmark

seemed to prove that British political morality was on a level with that of Napoleon.

After Denmark, Portugal. Napoleon ordered the Regent of Portugal to close his ports to British vessels and to declare war on Great Britain. Portugal was an old ally of Britain, and the Regent announced his intention of transferring both his government and his fleet to the Portuguese colony of Brazil. He was, however, a weak and dilatory man, and it was only after pressure from a British naval squadron that the Portuguese fleet sailed out of the Tagus on the day before the arrival of the French army under Junot (November 1807). Portugal

After Portugal, Spain. Ever since 1795, when she withdrew from the first coalition, Spain had pursued a policy as weak as that of Prussia and more disastrous. As the ally of France she had seen her navy defeated at St. Vincent and Trafalgar, her colony of Trinidad taken away by the Treaty of Amiens, and now a British expedition to Buenos Ayres, though it achieved no permanent result for Great Britain, had set going the movement which ended in the independence of the whole of Spanish America. The leading figures in the Spanish government were the king, Charles IV, his queen, the minister Godoy, who was notoriously the lover of the queen, and the heir to the throne, Prince Ferdinand, who posed as leader of opposition to the policy of his parents and their favourite. The quarrels of these people, who were all equally contemptible, gave Napoleon an excuse for introducing an army into Spain and summoning Ferdinand (who had just succeeded in deposing his parents) to the Conference at Bayonne. Thither came also the ex-king Charles IV. Both were induced to resign their claims to the Spanish throne, and Napoleon proclaimed his brother Joseph, king of Spain (May 1808). Murat was already in occupation of Madrid with a French army, and had suppressed with much bloodshed a rising of the populace. It was supposed that Spain would give little further trouble. Spain

But something happened quite outside the range of

Napoleon's experience and calculations. Unlike the Netherlanders, the Germans, and the Italians, the Spaniards constituted a *nation*, poor, ignorant and, as the war was to show, brutal, but intensely brave, proud and patriotic. Moreover, their very ignorance protected them. The Spaniards were still what they had been in the days of the Armada—ardently religious, devotedly loyal, and indifferent to all that the modern world calls progress. The "gospel of the French Revolution" had no attractions for them; they preferred the Spanish Inquisition. Everywhere the people rose. In July a French army was surrounded and compelled to surrender at Baylen.

Wellesley and Moore

In August Wellesley landed in Portugal with a small but efficient army, which he owed in part to Castlereagh at the War Office, and in part to the Duke of York, favourite son of George III, who, though he had failed as a commander in the Netherlands in the early campaigns of the war, had proved an excellent military organiser as Commander-in-Chief in Whitehall. Wellesley defeated Junot at Vimiero, and if a rival commander had not arrived to supersede him the next day, he would have made Junot and all his army prisoners of war. As it was, Junot's army was allowed to return to France by the Convention of Cintra.

Napoleon now took charge of the Spanish war in person, and crossing the Pyrenees with 250,000 men, advanced to Madrid. Both Wellesley and his successor were superseded, and the British force entrusted to an admirable officer, Sir John Moore, who with 40,000 men advanced against Napoleon's lines of communication. He achieved his purpose, and drew Napoleon after him, retreating rapidly and skilfully on Corunna. Napoleon confessed Moore's success by surrendering the command of the pursuit to Soult, who was defeated at Corunna before the arrival of the British transports (January 1809). Moore was killed, and for the moment there was no British force in the Peninsula; but the British government had at last found a profitable sphere of military effort, and Napoleon

had undertaken a task which proved to all the world that he was not invincible. The geographical limits of Napoleon's Empire continued to expand until 1810, but the tide had already turned against him in 1808.

Before we pass to the history of the European reaction against Napoleon, two questions may well be discussed. First, what was Napoleon's ultimate purpose in his career of conquest? and secondly, what permanent effects did it have on the conquered populations?

The first question cannot be answered with any certainty. We may regard Napoleon, if we like, as no more than an exceptionally aggressive and successful land-grabber, a new and greater Louis XIV, extending French frontiers not to the Rhine but to the Vistula; or as a Corsican adventurer who, having won a throne for himself, sought to provide thrones for all his brothers and sisters—and it would be wearisome to detail all the petty sovereignties he provided for them, in addition to those of Jerome and Joseph already mentioned. Some regard his European conquests as merely a means intended to secure the capitulation of Britain and the establishment of a French Empire on the ruins of the British. Others regard him as a man with a passion for good government, conquering the world in order to provide his insatiable energy with administrative work. Lastly, we may regard him as a heartless adventurer who had discovered that the way to get most sport out of his fellow-creatures was to form a certain number of them into a pack, and to use it for hunting the rest. There is some truth in each of these views, particularly the last. "Ah! la guerre! belle occupation!" exclaimed Napoleon in St. Helena.

What were Napoleon's objects?

When we come to results we are on surer ground. They were of two kinds. On the one hand, there can be no question that Napoleon's conquests established in Germany and in Italy a standard of good government unknown before. Feudalism was abolished; religious toleration and industrial freedom took the place of monopolies in Church and trade. Germans and Italians

Results of Napoleonic government

learnt what it meant to have state accounts properly kept and laws properly drafted. There is much to be said for the view that the greatest misfortune of modern Spain is that she was not conquered by Napoleon. Since Napoleonic conquest was bound to be brief, it was on the whole an experience worth having. The wounds dealt by Napoleon, it has been said, were surgical, and the patients, on recovery, were much healthier than before.

Napoleonic conquest was bound to be temporary, because, with all its benefits, it involved a crushing tyranny—tyranny by taxation, tyranny by conscription, and tyranny by the exclusion of all overseas trade. For Great Britain had retaliated on the Berlin Decree by an Order in Council which excluded all neutral overseas trade from the ports which excluded British goods. Thus prices soared and "the tobacconist was reduced to dependence on the neighbouring market-gardener." Crushed by this threefold tyranny the Germans began to realise that if there was no such thing as the German "nation"—well, then, there ought to be. The final result of Napoleonic conquest was to sow the seeds of national patriotism in Germany, and even in Italy, though Italy suffered much less than Germany from the rigours of Napoleonic warfare.

(ii) *The Downfall of Napoleon* (1809–1814)

The entanglement of French energies in Spain stimulated the Austrian government to enter once more upon war with France. Three times already—after Rivoli (1797), after Hohenlinden (1800), and after Austerlitz (1805)—she had been compelled to accept peace on humiliating terms, involving loss of territory. Now seemed the opportunity to try again, and it was a curious sign of the times that the most conservative government in Europe entered on war with a public appeal "to the German nation." The appeal was prophetic of the future, but it came too early. The Germans of the Confederation of the Rhine were as yet untouched by Germanic

The Fourth Austrian War

patriotism, and the Prussian Germans were as yet incapable of action without a lead from the Prussian government. Great Britain had now, thanks to Castlereagh, a well-trained army of 40,000 men over and above the 30,000 earmarked for the Peninsula, and a furious controversy raged in the Cabinet as to whether these 40,000 should be sent to North Germany to stir up a German revolt, or whether they should be sent against Antwerp. The government decided for the latter, and the result was the dismally unsuccessful undertaking, known as "the Walcheren expedition," which has become a byword for mismanagement. However, a great modern authority[1] holds that "the plan was a very sound one, and, in spite of its miscarriage, it gave Napoleon one of the worst frights of his life." Whatever the merits of the plan, the expedition proved a failure, and Britain gave no effective help or encouragement to Austria in her 1809 campaign.

The Austrians, as in 1805, advanced into Bavaria and were completely defeated there: Napoleon entered Vienna. Here, however, the parallel ends. In 1805 Napoleon had crossed the Danube without difficulty; in 1809 his first attempt at crossing involved a severe reverse in the battle of Aspern, which was only partially retrieved by a very costly victory at Wagram six weeks later. Lacking any effective ally, however, Austria made her fourth humiliating peace, and surrendered to Napoleon her only seaport, Trieste. Henceforth the exponents of German patriotism were out of power in Vienna. A crafty diplomatist, Count Metternich, took charge of the government, and provided Napoleon with a wife in the person of the Austrian Archduchess Marie Louise. Napoleon was in need of an heir, and, like the self-made millionaire, he desired to marry into one of the "best" families. The proud Tsar had refused his overtures, and Metternich realised that an Austrian marriage would hasten the inevitable quarrel between the allied tyrants of Tilsit.

[1] Fortescue, *Wellington*, p. 96. Walcheren was a fever-stricken island on the Belgian coast where the troops were disembarked.

Meanwhile Wellesley had been reappointed to the Peninsular command (April 1809). With 30,000 British troops and 70,000 Portuguese, who could be gradually trained under British officers, he believed that he could hold Lisbon, and compel the French to detach 100,000 men to deal with him. This would make it impossible for the remaining French forces to control the hostile Spanish provinces. Spanish armies were to prove entirely useless, but the Spanish population was an essential factor in the war now opening. Their hostility to the French made communication between the various French armies difficult or impossible, since half a company was needed to carry a message. Moreover, the French system was to "live on the country," and Spanish hostility made this both difficult and dangerous. Wellesley, on the other hand, was provisioned from his base, and reckoned to pay for all his supplies.

Peninsular War 1809–11

The campaign of 1809 began with the very smart ejectment of Soult from Oporto. Wellesley then invaded Spain, but the incompetence of the Spanish generals landed him in a very dangerous position, and after a victory at Talavera,[1] he was lucky to withdraw his forces without serious disaster to Portugal. In 1810 Napoleon, being at peace with all the continental states, was able to place 300,000 French soldiers in Spain. Why did he not come himself? was it because he thought the task too simple to merit his attention, or because he was secretly afraid of a sphere of operations in which he foresaw that victory was impossible? Instead he sent his best marshal, Masséna, and Masséna ran up against the famous lines of Torres Vedras, which entirely defeated him. In one sense Wellington was besieged within his lines, and Masséna the besieger; but the besieged Wellington was amply provisioned, while Masséna's army starved just as Napoleon's army afterwards starved in Russia. 1811 was a year without decisive events, but much was hoped from 1812, since many contingents

[1] After this battle he was raised to the peerage as Viscount Wellington.

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of the French forces were about to be withdrawn to fight in Russia.

The Russian Campaign

In December 1810 the Tsar Alexander, finding that the trade of Russia was being ruined merely to gratify Napoleon's enmity to Great Britain, abandoned the Treaty of Tilsit and opened his ports to British goods. Thereupon both Emperors prepared for war. Napoleon's preparations were on an unprecedented scale, and his armies numbered 600,000 men, far the largest ever seen in European warfare before the Great War. Not only were the German, Dutch and Italian territories subject to his rule compelled to furnish troops, but Prussia and Austria were forced to become his allies. Both these states remained in friendly communication with Russia, and it was understood that their forces would take no more part than they were compelled to take in the campaign. In June 1812 the main army of 380,000 under Napoleon himself entered Russian territory.

The gigantic expedition began to fail from the first. Napoleon had realised that his system of "living on the country" would prove impossible for so vast a host in so thinly-populated a country, but his system of provision from the base proved hopelessly inadequate. The Russians, under Barclay de Tolly, retreated, not by deep-laid design but because their numbers were only half those of the French, and Napoleon's army dwindled from sheer famine as it advanced. When he reached Borodino, seventy miles from Moscow, 175,000 of his 380,000 were disabled, missing or dead. Here the Russians, now commanded by the popular veteran Kutusov, fought a desperate battle in a vain attempt to save Moscow. Failing, they deserted their capital *en masse*. Napoleon spent five weeks (September–October) in the empty city,[1] vainly hoping for peace, and then the terrible retreat began, with 100,000 men, A

[1] During the first week of Napoleon's halt in Moscow half the city was destroyed by fires. Historians have been unable to decide whether these fires were kindled by Russians acting under the orders of Rostopchin the governor of the city or by disorderly French soldiers.

desperate attempt to secure a new, undevastated route for the return journey was defeated at Malo-Jaroslavetz. With 65,000 men the French returned to their old route, Kutusov keeping a parallel line, and cutting off stragglers. If Kutusov had been more enterprising and Napoleon less brilliantly resourceful, the whole army, including the Emperor, would have been made prisoners. On December 3, but 20,000 men recrossed the Niemen. Should Alexander make peace, content with his triumph, or should he go forward to the deliverance of Germany?

The Peninsular War 1812

Meanwhile Wellington's 1812 campaign had been marked by great, but not decisive, successes. Early in the year he captured the two great fortresses guarding the two main roads from Portugal into Spain, Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz. It is worth remarking that neither of these feats would have been possible if Marmont (who had succeeded Masséna in command of the main French army) had had his forces in a condition for campaign. But the vicious system of "living on the country," which made dispersal of his troops inevitable, rendered Marmont immobile. He could not gather his forces in time to relieve the first fortress, and he was afterwards unable to cross the long stretch of barren country which separated him from the second. Wellington then invaded Spain, and won a brilliant victory against a skilful enemy at Salamanca, and entered Madrid. Afterwards, however, he failed to capture Burgos and was compelled to return to Portugal.

Prussia

Meanwhile the seeds of great developments stretching far beyond the Napoleonic period were being sown in Prussia, though that unfortunate kingdom was still apparently under the heel of the conqueror. A great statesman, Stein, abolished serfdom, and a great military organiser, Scharnhorst, remodelled the Prussian army on a new system, which was to be adopted by all the great Continental states of the nineteenth century. Hitherto conscripts had been taken by ballot and for an indefinite period of service. Scharnhorst's system, though he could

only carry it out very imperfectly under the difficult circumstances of the time, aimed at universal conscription for a brief period in the "active army," after which the conscript passed into the "reserve," which was ready to be called to the colours on declaration of war.

When Napoleon declared war on Russia, the Tsar invited the exiled Stein to his court, and there is no doubt that Stein's influence played an important part in persuading the Tsar, at the end of 1812, to carry the war into Germany instead of making peace with Napoleon, as many of his Russian councillors advised. On December 30 General York, who commanded the Prussian contingent of Napoleon's army, came to terms with the Russians on his own responsibility and admitted them to Konigsberg, the easternmost city of Prussia. After this act of patriotic "treason" Alexander sent Stein to East Prussia to organise a national rising, and in March Frederick William III followed the lead of his subjects and declared war on Napoleon. By the Treaty of Kalisch, between Russia and Prussia, it was arranged that Prussia should surrender to Russia her claims on the Polish territories she had acquired in 1792 and 1795 (and lost at Tilsit), and that she should receive compensation in western Germany. Thus the war of German Liberation began. Stein and many leaders of German thought already saw visions of a united Germany emerging from the downfall of the Napoleonic Empire. But as yet the western Germans of the Confederation of the Rhine showed no signs of a desire to throw off the foreign yoke, and in fact the visions of a united Germany were doomed to be unrealised.

The Treaty of Kalisch

The campaign opened on the Elbe in May, and Napoleon, with an army of raw conscripts officered by the survivors from Russia, won victories at Lutzen and Bautzen. They were not decisive victories, yet they were exceedingly disappointing to the Allies. Then Napoleon granted an armistice, which lasted ten weeks (June–August). It was a fatal error, for it enabled his enemies to mobilise immensely increased resources. His object was to frighten Austria.

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Austria had declared her neutrality after the Russian campaign, but was still nominally friendly to Napoleon.

The intervention of Austria

The crafty Metternich was by no means anxious to see Napoleon decisively beaten, for that would mean a great accession of strength to Russia and Prussia. The very idea of a united Germany was intolerable to Austria, for it would inevitably mean (as it came to mean in Bismarck's day) the exclusion of Austria from her ancient position as the leading state of Central Europe. None the less Metternich was determined to recover Trieste, which Napoleon had taken from Austria in 1809. He would prefer to secure it by amicable arrangement with Napoleon; if he could secure it thus, he was prepared to arbitrate between Napoleon and the Allies and to secure Napoleon the whole of his existing empire in Italy and western Germany. But if Napoleon refused he would join the Allies. Had Napoleon not been blinded by an exaggerated notion of his own genius and his enemies' incompetence, he would have closed with this offer. Instead, he made the armistice, and used it in a vain attempt to frighten Austria by massing troops on her frontier. He rejected the Austrian proposal, and Austria joined the Allies. But she joined on her own terms. By the Treaty of Teplitz it was agreed that every German state within the Confederation of the Rhine should henceforth enjoy complete independence. The overthrow of Napoleon was purchased at the price of the disunion of Germany. Metternich had defeated Stein.

The downfall of Napoleon

Napoleon won one more brilliant victory over the Austrians, Russians and Prussians at Dresden in August, but his other armies under various marshals were defeated in a series of minor battles, and in October Napoleon himself was utterly overwhelmed in the great three-days' battle of Leipzig, the biggest battle hitherto fought in Europe. The Allies had 300,000 and Napoleon 170,000 men. Even after this battle Napoleon might have had peace with the Rhine as his frontier, but he refused. In January 1814 the Allies invaded France, and though Napoleon held them at bay for a time

in what Wellington regarded as the most brilliant of all his campaigns, sheer weight of numbers made his failure inevitable, and the Allies entered Paris at the end of March. By this time the Allies had determined on Napoleon's dethronement, and his own marshals, weary of the hopeless struggle, forced him to abdicate.

Wellington, meanwhile, had crossed the Portuguese frontier for the last time in the same week as the battle of Lutzen, and had won his crowning victory of Vittoria during the fatal armistice in the German war. Some months before the end of the year he had captured the last Spanish fortresses, and was thus easily the first of Napoleon's enemies to enter France. A brilliant campaign against Soult in the south-west of France ended with the battle of Toulouse.

The Peninsular War 1813–14

The Peninsular War is the greatest episode in the history of the British Army before the Great War. From 1808 onwards British troops had met the supposedly invincible French in pitched battles and had beaten them again and again. The infantry had proved themselves superior in discipline and in rifle-fire; the cavalry were better mounted; and the new kind of "long-range grape-shot" recently invented by Major Shrapnel was superior to any French artillery ammunition of the same kind. But the chief factor in the successes of the Peninsular armies had been the ability and character of their commander-in-chief. Wellington combined an extremely good judgment of the military situation in general and of the best plan of campaign with unfailing coolness and decision on the field of battle. He also set himself to establish in his army a new and higher standard of good conduct and discipline. Here his task was far from easy. It was perhaps a small matter, judged by the standards of the day, that on certain occasions, as after the heroic storming of Badajoz, his soldiers threw off all restraint for several days and "ran amok" in the captured city. Discipline was lax enough at all times, except on the field of battle. The extent of drunkenness in the army was quite astonishing though certainly not worse than in the

French armies.[1] Yet Wellington's standards gradually prevailed. His success was proved by the admirable conduct of his army after its entry into France. Its conduct contrasted so markedly with that of the French, that the French peasantry readily sold food and baggage-animals to his officers, and refused, whenever they could, to render the same assistance to Soult. When Wellington found that his Spanish contingents would not behave themselves in France he sent them back to Spain.

Wellington's fame is so bright that it seems to have rendered invisible to posterity the services of the British ministers at home. Castlereagh and Canning had quarrelled after the Walcheren fiasco, fought a duel, and resigned.

The British Government

Perceval became Prime Minister (1809–1812), with Lord Liverpool as his Minister at the War Office. The names of Perceval and Liverpool are not much honoured to-day, yet but for their steady support of Wellington, against a strong Whig opposition which demanded the withdrawal of our army from the Peninsula, Wellington's performance would have been impossible. In 1812 Perceval was shot by a lunatic, and Liverpool became Prime Minister, with Castlereagh as his Foreign Secretary. It was Castlereagh more than any other single man who, after Napoleon's brilliant successes against the Allied invaders of France in the first months of 1814, nerved the Continental leaders to go forward with their task and insist on Napoleon's abdication.

(iii) *The Hundred Days and the Resettlement of Europe* (1815)

By the Treaty of Paris, 1814, France was reduced to her pre-revolutionary frontier, with a few small additions.

The Bourbon Restoration

The Allies considered that they had been very generous in not treating France as France had treated them in the days of her victories; in taking from her none of her own provinces and in demanding no indemnity. They wished, in fact, to give the restored

[1] See Fortescue, *Wellington*, p. 165, for a few details on this subject.

Bourbon king, Louis XVIII,[1] as good a start as possible. Frenchmen, on the other hand, regarded the matter in a different light. They felt that Belgium and the German territories west of the Rhine, which had been conquered before Napoleon's day, had become genuinely part of France. They also noted that all the other great Powers emerged from the war with increased territories. Louis XVIII undertook, on his accession, that feudal privilege should not be restored, but he was too weak or too lazy to restrain the activities of the returned *émigré* nobles, who secured all the lucrative posts in the government and the army, and generally speaking conducted themselves in a manner intensely vexatious to a France which had forgotten their very existence and only remembered the glories and the tragedies of the Napoleonic regime. Thus within less than a year the Restoration had made itself thoroughly unpopular.

The Hundred Days

The Allies, with misplaced chivalry, had allotted to Napoleon the island of Elba, as a "kingdom" rather than a prison, where he kept state with a guard of over a thousand devoted followers. Encouraged by the folly of his successors, he set sail for France with his guard, and landed near Cannes on March 1. The troops sent against him joined his standard, and less than three weeks after his landing he entered Paris in triumph. Napoleon's return was, in fact, welcomed by the army and by the masses, but the educated and middle classes looked askance, and his decree, announcing a parliament on the lines of Louis XVIII's Charter, failed to conciliate them. Equally vain for a different reason was his proclamation that he proposed henceforth to maintain peace with all his neighbours. The Allies, who were engaged, not very amicably, in redrawing the map of Europe at the Congress of Vienna, immediately forgot their quarrels and declared war upon him as a common enemy of mankind.

[1] He was brother of Louis XVI, whose son was regarded as having theoretically reigned as Louis XVII from the execution of his father till his own death in prison in 1794. This prince's death is a great mystery: some hold (with apparently good reason) that he did not die in prison, but escaped. Anyhow, he disappeared.

The famous campaign that followed is the shortest in history. The British and the Prussians were the first in the field, and were converging on the Franco-Belgian frontier, the British from Ostend and the Prussians from Cologne. Most of Wellington's Peninsular veterans had been sent to take part in the war against the United States, and his present army, which he described as "infamous," consisted of about 35,000 British and 60,000 Hanoverian, Dutch, and Belgian troops, many of the last being in sympathy with France. The Prussians had about 120,000, and Napoleon rather more.

The Waterloo campaign

Napoleon crossed the Sambre at Charleroi on June 15. His object was to deal with his two enemies separately, one after the other, before they could unite; and, up to a point, he succeeded. On June 16 he defeated the Prussians at Ligny, but part of his army, under Ney, was occupied at the same time in a series of unsuccessful attacks on Wellington's forces at Quatre Bras, about seven miles to the north-west of Ligny. Napoleon had, thus, succeeded in attacking the Allies separately, but *not* one after the other, and was unable to defeat the Prussians severely enough to drive them back eastwards. On the 17th, Wellington and Blucher, the Prussian commander, retreated northwards on parallel lines—Wellington to Waterloo and Blucher to Wavre. Napoleon, despatching too late an inadequate force under Grouchy to head off the Prussians, concentrated the bulk of his forces against Wellington.

The Battle of Waterloo was, in every sense of the word, the climax of Wellington's military career. He had a very miscellaneous and inexperienced force, and he had to make them withstand repeated attacks hour after hour, till the arrival of the Prussians on Napoleon's right placed the Allies in a position to charge, and win a decisive victory. Nothing but his personal authority and his personal presence wherever the attack was hottest would have availed. "It has been a damned nice thing," he said next day, "the nearest run thing that ever you saw in your life. I don't think it would have been done if I had not been there."

The victory was shatteringly complete. Ten days later the Prussians were outside Paris. On July 3, Paris capitulated, and Louis XVIII was restored. Napoleon fled to Rochefort and, failing to escape to America, surrendered to a British ship, and was in due course conveyed to St. Helena, where he occupied himself in quarrelling with the British governor, and in writing highly fictitious memoirs of his career. By the second treaty of Paris France was forced to pay an indemnity of £28,000,000 and to bear the expenses of an Allied army of occupation for five years. Prussia urged that Alsace and Lorraine should be made a German state, but this proposal was rejected, mainly through the influence of Wellington. The French were also compelled to restore the numerous works of art which Napoleon had taken from the cities of Italy and Germany —a reasonable demand which none the less was bitterly resented.

(iv) *Europe : The Congress of Vienna*

The redrawing of the map of Central Europe was no simple matter, after twenty-two years of warfare broken by temporary settlements in which territories had been handed about as the chances of war dictated. That France must give up all her gains was clear enough—but what next? Was the old pre-war map to be restored? Certainly not in Poland, for example, where the now victorious allies had robbed a neighbour with an unscrupulousness equal to that of any Jacobin government. Moreover, by the Treaty of Kalisch in 1812 it had been agreed that Prussia should surrender to Russia most of her Polish gains, and receive compensation in Germany. By the Treaty of Teplitz in 1813 it had been agreed that all the German princes in the Confederation of the Rhine should retain their territories and be independent. But there were other parts of western Germany, the so-called Kingdom of Westphalia created by Napoleon for his brother Jerome, to which the Treaty of Teplitz did

The European problem

not apply. This territory had previously consisted of very small German states, many of them ecclesiastical, and no one agitated for their restoration. Here was the obvious place for Prussia's "compensation."

The questions to be settled may be divided into the easy and the difficult—those on which the Allies agreed and those on which they disagreed. The former were settled by clauses in the first Treaty of Paris (May 1814); the latter were left over for settlement by a Congress which was to meet in the autumn at Vienna.

The Treaty of Paris, 1814

By the Treaty of Paris, the House of Orange was restored in Holland and received Belgium; the House of Savoy was restored in Piedmont and received the former republic of Genoa; the Austrian Emperor recovered his old province of Lombardy and received in addition the former republic of Venice. All these arrangements were "agreed," and yet how unwise they seem in the light of later events! For nineteenth-century history was to be dominated by the instinct of *nationality*, a fact of which the Allied sovereigns and their ministers had no inkling. For them the great democratic impulses stirred by the French Revolution had no importance now that the wars were over; no further consequences of these impulses were expected. Austria no longer wanted Belgium, so it was given to Holland, in order to create a strong state on the northern frontier of France. The Allied leaders did not realise that the Belgians, being Catholic and more than half French, would not readily submit to Dutch rule, and that the new kingdom would prove weak, not strong. Belgium secured its independence in 1830. Again, the instinct of nationality would not permanently tolerate Austrian rule in northern Italy. These provinces proved an embarrassment rather than a source of strength to Austria, and were lost by her in 1859 and 1866. The union of Piedmont and Genoa did not, indeed, offend the instinct of nationality, but it certainly did not prove a barrier against French aggression. Piedmont-Genoa was to provide a king for united Italy, and, in 1859, the French armies of another Napoleon

entered Piedmont in alliance with her king to drive the Austrians out of Lombardy.

Throughout the rest of Italy the old divisions were restored. Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and the Papal States were as before, but it was not till the Hundred Days that Murat, the Napoleonic king of Naples, was deposed in favour of the Neapolitan Bourbons. In Spain and Portugal also the old royal families returned to their thrones.

The Congress of Vienna met in September 1814, while Napoleon was at Elba, under the Presidency of the Austrian Chancellor, Metternich. All the Great Powers and the minor states sent their representatives, but the representatives of the four great Allies, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Great Britain, determined to settle everything themselves, and to submit their decision to the rest for no more than formal ratification. Unfortunately for the success of his plan, the "Four" found themselves unable to agree. The most troublesome question was the Prussian "compensation" already mentioned. Prussia attached but little value to Westphalia, because it was separated from the rest of her territory by the independent kingdom of Hanover, and demanded in addition the right to annex Saxony, whose king had been a faithful ally of Napoleon up to the time of the battle of Leipzig. Austria objected to an arrangement that would strengthen Prussia in eastern Germany. Russia supported Prussia, and Great Britain supported Austria. Each party naturally looked for support outside, and here Talleyrand, the cleverest diplomatist at Vienna, found an opportunity to assert the influence of France.

The Congress of Vienna

Talleyrand had a long and varied career behind him, and in front of him. Though an aristocrat and a bishop under the *ancien régime*, he had thrown in his lot with the Revolution from the first. He had opposed the aggressive tactics by which the Revolutionary government had involved itself in war with all Europe, and in 1799 had played an important part in assisting Bonaparte to make himself master of France. For ten years he was

Talleyrand at Vienna

Napoleon's foreign minister, but he had quarrelled with him when he saw that Napoleon's mad militarism was leading to inevitable ruin. He had then worked secretly for the overthrow of Napoleon, and had played an important part in the restoration of Louis XVIII. He was entirely unscrupulous in his methods, but quite consistent in his devotion to what he conceived to be the interests of his country. He now offered the alliance of France to Great Britain and Austria for the defence of "legitimacy," as he called it, against the designs of Prussia and Russia. Prussia and Russia gave way, and the Saxon king was restored, though part of his kingdom was allotted to Prussia, in addition to Westphalia. In the twinkling of an eye France found herself once again a recognised "Great Power," allied with two of her late enemies against the other two.

Then came the return of Napoleon, and Talleyrand's diplomatic card-castle fell in ruins.

During the Hundred Days the Congress pursued and completed its work, settling the chief outstanding question, the future organisation of Germany. Stein pleaded for a really effective unification of Germany, with a central authority based on some sort of parliamentary system, and strong enough to overrule the princes of the various states. But the Treaty of Teplitz had already decided otherwise, and there was no German public opinion behind Stein, strong enough to override that decision. German national aspirations were as yet mainly confined to poets, philosophers, and students. Moreover, Austria and Prussia were both German states and there seemed no way of reconciling Stein's federal Germany with their independent and rival sovereignties. Germany emerged from the Congress of Vienna a "Federation" of thirty-nine states—independent in so far as the ruler of each was completely master of his own territory and subjects; "federated" in so far as each undertook to send ambassadors to a Federal Diet for the discussion of affairs common to all Germany, and to refrain from making alliances with non-German states. In effect the old sham "Roman" Empire

The German Federation

was restored, with the difference that, by the suppression of some three hundred small feudal and ecclesiastical principedoms and "free cities," the States of Germany were reduced in number from about 360 to thirty-nine. For the next thirty-three years Austria, under the skilful guidance of Metternich, was to exercise decidedly more influence over the rest of Germany than she had done in the old days when her ruler had been nominally German king and Roman emperor.

Such were the results of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era in so far as they were inscribed in the Treaties of 1814 and 1815. But what were its results as recorded in the minds of men? For the peoples of Europe had endured a series of unprecedented experiences. The immediate result might be sheer exhaustion, and the comparative quietude that exhaustion entails. But when the period of exhaustion was over, the ultimate results of the great upheaval would begin to show themselves.

Final Results

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The conquests of the French armies were all gone, and nothing was left to show for all the terrible loss of French lives and French wealth entailed. None the less the main lines of the new social and political system established by the Revolution and Napoleon survived, and it has proved in essentials indestructible. France was henceforth the most democratic of European nations, and no subsequent government which failed to recognise the French sentiment of equality was destined to survive there.

In Italy and Germany Napoleonic conquest had demonstrated the artificiality of the ancient frontiers which partitioned these countries in the interests of petty dynasties. The follies of most of the restored princelings, whose governments were as despotic as that of Napoleon and so much less intelligent, kept alive the spirit of unrest. A long interval of stagnation separates the fall of Napoleon from the revolutions and wars that made a united Italy and a united Germany, but France had taught her neighbours lessons that were not forgotten. The French Revolution

had taught the power of popular enthusiasm, and Napoleon had taught the power of military efficiency. The former lesson was applied by Garibaldi, the latter by Bismarck. After the long stagnation came the era of democracy, of nationalism, and of conscription—all three, in different ways, products of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era.

When the war ended at last, Great Britain undoubtedly stood foremost among the Great Powers of the world. The conquests we retained as the reward of victory—Malta, Mauritius, Ceylon and the Cape Colony—important as they proved to be, were by no means the most impressive aspect of our performance. We alone had fought almost continuously against Revolutionary France, whereas Austria, Prussia and Russia had each of them several times accepted humiliating terms of peace. Our navies had maintained their supremacy, and the early humiliations of our armies had been cast in the shade by the Peninsular campaigns and the final victory of Waterloo. In 1815 Wellington was unquestionably the only figure in the world whose eminence could be compared, without absurdity, with that of Napoleon.

The end of the war

Yet the glory of 1815 had been bought at a great price. The losses in killed and wounded had, indeed, been quite small, not only by the standard set in the Great war of our own times, but also by the standard of the losses of our continental allies and our enemy. England had never been, like Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, nor even like Spain and Germany in the later stages, a nation in arms. Financially the loss had been heavier. The National Debt had risen from £240,000,000 to £860,000,000, and the sum raised annually in taxes during the later years of the war had been more than double the highest amount raised in any year before 1793. But even this burden had been fairly easily borne; the worst of the financial stress was to come in the first years of the peace after Waterloo. The real cost of the war had been the perversion of English domestic policy during years which, by a disastrous coincidence, were not only the years of our greatest

The price of the war

war hitherto, but also the years of an unprecedented revolution in the conditions of industry and, consequently, of social life. Never had there been a time when England needed from her statesmen a more vigilant and open-minded attention to domestic problems. Yet during those years they were compelled to concentrate all their energies on war, and on providing the sinews of war; and at the same time, the revolutionary character of their adversary drove them, by a natural but erroneous course of reasoning, into an obstinate opposition to every species of domestic reform. On this subject more will be said in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RISE OF MODERN INDUSTRY

"Politics were languid; religion was tired; social life was a spent routine; industrial development, on the other hand, was active, and it put pressing problems and offered tempting prizes to the imagination and energy of the age."[1] The long reign of George III, which witnessed the establishment of British rule in India and Canada, and its beginnings in Australia and South Africa, the loss of the old American colonies, the long struggle with the French Revolution and Napoleon, and the abolition of the Slave Trade, also included a series of events which affected the lives of ordinary Englishmen much more profoundly than any of these—the series of events commonly grouped together under the title of the Industrial Revolution. In one industry after another handicrafts were superseded by machinery, driven first by water power and afterwards by the steam engine. The modern factory system and modern capitalism began to take the place they now occupy in our social organisation.

It is reasonable to ask why it was Britain, rather than any other country, that took the lead in these developments.

Modern commerce

Pure chance may have played a part in the matter, but probably a very small part. Modern industry took its rise in Britain because modern commerce had already attained there a fuller development than in any other country. The modern manufacturer grew up in the soil that had already produced the modern merchant or world-wide trader, and the modern banker.

The commerce of the ancient world and the mediæval world had been mainly a commerce in luxuries—spices, precious stones, dyes, glass, silk, rugs, tapestries, porcelain.

[1] J. L. and B. Hammond, *The Rise of Modern Industry*, p. 65.

The bulk of the population fed itself, clothed itself, and housed itself with materials produced at home. Modern commerce begins when the merchant begins to cater for the masses. The change comes very gradually, and it is spread over the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Take four articles of common use—tobacco, tea, sugar, and rice, none of them products of Europe. Tobacco was the principal export of Virginia, from Stuart times onward. In 1742 a writer complains that "the meanest families" of the Lowlands of Scotland have given up beer for tea. In the seventeenth century sugar was a rich man's luxury, and the poor still sweetened their food with honey; in the eighteenth century honey gave place to sugar. A cookery book of George I's reign does not mention rice; another, at the end of the century, uses it in twenty-two recipes.

Britain took the lead in the new commerce owing to her geographical position. She stood on the threshold of the Old World, looking out towards the New. Also, her island position protected her people from the worst consequences of war. From the time of the Commonwealth onward wars were fought, first against the Dutch and then against the French, very largely for the sake of commerce—for "empire" as we say; but empire itself was but another name for commerce when the value of colonies was held to lie solely in the control of their trade. As a rule the British won these wars, and secured the coveted prizes of victory in America and Asia; but, over and above the fact of victory, her trading folk at home suffered far less than those of other countries. England was never devastated as Holland was in her wars with Spain and Louis XIV, nor as Germany by the French invasions in the Thirty Years' War and the wars of the eighteenth century, nor did she exhaust her man-power by immense military efforts as did the France of Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Napoleon. On the eve of the Revolutionary wars the volume of French foreign trade (*i.e.* imports and exports combined) was larger than that of England by 25 per cent.: after 1815 it was very much smaller.

Commercial wars

A country cannot afford to import unless it has something

worth exporting in exchange. To-day we buy our foreign-grown food with the products of our factories and mines; but the commercial expansion we have been describing preceded the Industrial Revolution, and our exports were hand-made articles, *manu*factures in the original sense of that strangely perverted word. Here it is worth remarking how much British production before the Industrial Revolution owed to foreign refugees. Since the days of the spinning-jenny and the steam engine we have (until very recent times) led the world in industry: before those days we were intelligent learners rather than teachers. In the Middle Ages unpopular Flemish intruders laid the foundations of our weaving industries. At the end of the seventeenth century, Huguenots expelled from France, and Dutchmen coming in the wake of William of Orange, were mainly responsible for the development of the production of the finer types of cloth (hitherto imported), and of silk weaving, calico-printing, high-class pottery, and glass.

Commerce and government

In England the aristocracy, who wrested from the kings the control of the government, were closely allied with the commercial classes. They depended on them, in fact, for political power, and adopted a policy agreeable to their interests. Eldest sons recruited their fortunes by marrying commercial heiresses, and younger sons entered commercial life. There was, in fact, no clear line of division between the two classes. The victory of the Whigs over the Tories is largely the victory of commercial over non-commercial interests, and when the Tories returned to power under George III they too had become commercialised. Voltaire, visiting England under George I, was surprised to find that the aristocracy were not ashamed of trade. Burke was the greatest champion of aristocratic government, and regarded the British constitution as the acme of political perfection. He declares that "our prosperity and dignity are principally if not solely from two sources; our constitution and our commerce."

Observers of the prosperity of the United States and the distress of Europe to-day, remark that one of the principal

causes of that contrast is that the United States is the largest area of free trade in the world, whereas European commerce is impeded by almost innumerable tariff-barriers erected by short-sighted nationalist competition. In the eighteenth century, singular as it may seem, England and Scotland enjoyed the advantage, now enjoyed by America, of being the largest free-trading area. France, though united politically, was divided commercially, each province and each town charging duties on imports from other parts of France. Germany and Italy were divided into a multitude of small states each with its own tariff system.

Internal free trade and transport

But the profits of internal free trade will not be realised unless there is a tolerable system of transport. The roads of George I's reign were appalling; they would have earned the contempt not only of an Englishman of the twentieth, but of a Roman of the second century. Improvement began under George II, stimulated by the difficulty experienced in moving troops to cope with the Jacobite rebellion. Perhaps the only important result—so strange are the cause-and-effect sequences of history—of the romantic venture of "the 'forty-five" was the impetus it gave to road-making. The method employed was to establish Turnpike Trusts by Act of Parliament; these were private companies which undertook to construct and maintain a certain section of road, and were empowered to levy tolls upon all users. By the end of the century the Turnpike Trusts, employing skilled engineers and experts in road-surface construction, such as Telford and Macadam, had transformed the roads of the country. Thereupon other companies developed the system of stage coaches. In 1700 it took a week to get from York to London; in 1815 the stage coach accomplished the journey in twenty-one hours. In 1770 there was only one coach on the route from Liverpool to London via Manchester: in 1816 seventy coaches served this route, six covering the journey every day in something over twenty-four hours.

But for heavy goods such as coal, water transport is far cheaper than roads. In 1750 there were no canals in Eng-

land, though three great canals had been constructed a century earlier in France. The Duke of Bridgewater, finding that it cost him ten shillings a ton to transport coal into Manchester from his colliery only seven miles off, employed an engineer named Brindley to construct a canal. This seven-mile canal (1761) involved a triumph over engineering difficulties hitherto deemed insoluble, and it started the epoch of canal building. In 1800 there were 3000 miles of canal in England. Railways lie beyond the end of our period. It was the new roads and the canals that made commercially possible the vast development of machine and steam power production in the reign of George III. Without these the power-looms and the steam engines would have been able neither to collect their raw materials nor to distribute their products.

Before passing on to the revolution in industry, it will be best to say something of agriculture; for agriculture still provided the occupation and livelihood of the greater part of the population, and it too, in this period, suffered a revolution in methods and conditions. It is sometimes called the Agrarian Revolution.

The Agrarian Revolution

More than half of the agricultural land of England was still owned and cultivated after the manner of the Middle Ages. The essence of that system was co-operative or "communal" labour. It was not a system of communism, or common ownership, for the various members of the village community each had their own property rights, some large and some small. Personal property was combined with common management. The arable land of the village was divided into strips, by a band of grass or by a furrow. The strips had different owners, some owning few and some many, and the strips of those who owned many would be scattered about. The hay on the meadow land was similarly divided, and each villager had the right to pasture beasts and gather wood on the "common" or waste land. Two essential features of this system should be noticed. First, though there were great diversities of property rights, hardly any villagers were entirely without property rights of some

kind in the productivity of the village, even if it were only rights of pasture and wood-cutting; the poorest labourer had his claims on the soil. Secondly, the management, or agricultural "policy" of the village was decided, in accordance with custom, by a "court" or council of all the villagers.

In the times of Lancaster and York and the early Tudors, the development of the woollen industry and the high profits consequent in sheep-farming had led to the first great inroad upon this system. About a tenth of the agricultural land of England, chiefly in the Midlands, had been "enclosed" for sheep-farming purposes. Wealthy landowners had made enclosures which often included much more than their legal rights, and had broken up the old communal system. Then the enclosure movement died down for about two hundred years, though it never entirely stopped. Finally, between 1760 and 1840, enclosure began again on an unprecedented scale. The land of about 2500 villages was enclosed, and the old system almost entirely disappeared.

The motive was the new spirit of scientific improvement that in other spheres produced the power-loom and the steam engine. Tull and others worked out an improved system of rotation of crops based on the alternation of corn and root-crops, and showed the economy of drilling in rows instead of sowing broadcast. Bakewell revealed the extraordinary improvements in the quality of live-stock that could be effected by breeding only from selected animals of the best quality. Two great Norfolk landowners, Townshend and Coke, demonstrated on a large scale the profits to be made by scientific farming. Coke multiplied his rent-roll by ten, and at the same time made the fortunes of his tenants. Meanwhile population was beginning to grow faster than before; more food could find a market, and the long French wars, together with a singular series of bad harvests at the beginning of the nineteenth century, caused an immense rise in prices of agricultural produce. Under such circumstances it seemed intolerable to the wealthy, educated, and enterprising agriculturist that he should be tied down to old methods by the ignorant

conservatism of the villagers. Hence the renewed agitation for enclosures.

Each enclosure was effected by an Act of Parliament, and in parliament the wealthy landowner was supreme and the peasant unrepresented. In theory an Enclosure Act drew a new map of the village in which each participant in the old open-field agriculture received a separate share of land equivalent in value to his rights under the old system. But in many cases the division was not fairly made; and even when it was fairly made the "small man" was at an immense disadvantage. His new holding was too small; he had not the enterprise or knowledge to develop it on his own initiative; he had not the capital to pay for fencing it. So he sold it, and became, as he remains to-day, a propertyless wage-earner, working for others. Arthur Young, the great English agricultural expert at the end of the eighteenth century, had strongly advocated enclosures as essential to efficiency; but he declared that "by nineteen out of twenty Enclosure Bills the poor are injured, and most grossly." Others felt no regrets in the matter. A certain Mr. Bishton of Shropshire in 1794 looked forward to the time when all the common lands would be enclosed. " For," he said, "the commons operate upon the mind as a sort of independence," and their abolition will secure "that subordination of the lower ranks of society, which in the present times is much wanted."

Results of enclosures

The evil effects of the change would have been reduced if parliament had established a minimum wage, varying with the market price of corn, for the agricultural labourer. Samuel Whitbread, a philanthropic Whig politician, introduced a Bill with this object in 1795: it was supported by Fox, but Pitt secured its defeat. The remedy adopted was very different. In the same year the Berkshire magistrates, meeting at Speenhamland (now part of Newbury), after expressing a pious hope that farmers would pay adequate wages, decided to subsidise existing wages out of the rates, on a scale based upon the size of the labourer's family. This Speenhamland System, as it was

The Speenhamland System

called, spread rapidly over England, with the most disastrous results. Wages fell, rates rose, and more and more of the agricultural poor became paupers in receipt of relief. At the same time the landowners were making fortunes such as had never fallen to their lot before.

There was another cause, besides Enclosure and Speenhamland, contributing to the depression of the agricultural labourer. Hitherto he had supplemented his income with the money earned by his wife and children at the spinning-wheel. Now the new spinning machinery was driving the "spinster" out of the market, and destroying the peasant family's by-industry.

The cotton industry furnishes the most sensational illustrations of the effects of the Industrial Revolution. India is the original home of cotton growing and the cotton industry, and calico (or cotton cloth) takes its name from the Indian port of Calicut. Before Vasco da Gama reached India by the Cape, Oriental sea-merchants carried Indian cotton to Persia and Egypt. In the seventeenth century the English East India Company did a profitable trade in carrying Indian cotton goods to Europe. Cotton manufacture had been established in Spain by the Moors as early as the tenth century, but the first manufacture of cotton goods in England (at Manchester) dates from 1641, and these were of very coarse quality. Two processes were involved—spinning, or the making of thread from raw cotton wool, and weaving, or the making of calico from the thread. Spinning was mainly done by women and children in their cottages: weaving was not a by-industry, but was carried on by weavers who bought the thread from the cottagers and worked it into cloth on hand looms.

The cotton industry

The first inventions, Kay's flying shuttle (1733) and Hargreaves' multiple spinning-wheel, or spinning jenny (1770), merely increased the output of the hand-workers in the two industries. But Arkwright and Crompton (1775 and 1779) invented spinning machines worked by water-power which gradually ruined the hand-spinning industry. The weavers now enjoyed a brief spell of great prosperity, but from 1785

onwards, water-driven machinery invaded the weaving industry also, and by 1813 there were already 2400 "power-looms" at work. Meanwhile James Watt, a mathematical instrument worker at Glasgow, had effected such improvements in the steam engine that it began to supersede water-power as the driving force of spinning and weaving machines.

The development of the cotton industry can be illustrated by figures. In 1764 England imported less than 4,000,000 pounds of cotton; in 1815, more than 100,000,000. Liverpool, which had anticipated ruin from the abolition of the Slave Trade, was more prosperous than ever. Most of this cotton came from the Southern States of the United States, where another invention, Whitney's saw-gin, had enormously facilitated the initial process of "cleaning" the cotton-wool by separating it from its seeds.

The development of the woollen industry was of the same character, but later in date, and less overwhelming, for wool was not a newly-imported industry like cotton, but had long been the foremost English industry. South Lancashire was from the first the home of the cotton industry because its damp climate preserves the cotton in the best condition for work. The old centres of the woollen industry had been East Anglia, Somersetshire, and the West Riding of Yorkshire. With the coming of the new machinery the last-named district gradually asserted its pre-eminence and drew to itself much of the industry of the other two; first, on account of its wealth of water-power, and afterwards on account of its coal.

The story of the steam engine illustrates the well-known proverb, "Necessity is the mother of invention," and also the fact that what is invented for one purpose may prove useful for another. In the middle of the eighteenth century the English iron industry of Surrey and Sussex was in a difficulty. It had depended on wood for its fuel, and the local forests were well-nigh exhausted. The industry was, in fact, migrating to Scandinavia and North America. Thereupon various inventors, the chief of whom were Abraham Darby and Henry Cort, discovered how to

The steam engine

work iron by means of coal furnaces; so the iron industry migrated to the coal-fields. Coal-mining now developed, and, as pits got deeper, the problem of pumping out the water became more acute. The first steam engine employed in industry[1] was patented in 1689 by Thomas Savery, and called "The Miners' Friend, or an engine to raise water by fire." But this machine and those of Newcomen in the early eighteenth century were very wasteful and unsatisfactory. Watt improved on Newcomen's engine by inventing what is called "the separate condenser," and his first successful engine was completed in 1776, the year of the American Declaration of Independence. For many years his chief customers were the collieries and the tin mines of Cornwall. The first cotton-mill worked by steam power was erected in 1789, the date of the outbreak of the French Revolution.

"The steam engine," it has been said, "was invented too soon for the happiness of man." In one sense it was invented none too soon for the welfare of Britain. Without the new wealth created by the new factories, Britain could never have faced twenty-two years of war with the French Revolution and Napoleon. Napoleon was defeated by the work not only of Nelson and of Wellington, but equally by the work of Arkwright and Watt. The battle of Waterloo was won in other places besides the playing-fields of Eton; it was won in the mines and the factories where other children, less fortunate than Eton boys, toiled at monotonous tasks for incredible hours—twelve or fourteen a day. It was such iniquities as these that the writer of the sentence that opens this paragraph had in mind. The new factory system grew up in an England not yet converted to the abolition of negro slavery, and it established in its "dark Satanic mills"[2] another slavery as

Evils of the industrial Revolution

[1] The principle of the steam engine was accurately described by an Alexandrian Greek named Hero, in the first century B.C. Hero's book was published at the Renaissance, and from that date onwards various inventors, derided as cranks by their contemporaries, worked at the problem of applying Hero's principles. Savery's machine was the first to achieve commercial usefulness.

[2] Blake's now famous *Jerusalem*, from which this phrase is taken, was published in 1804.

terrible as the slavery of West Indian plantations. "While the engine runs," said an observer, "the people must work —men, women and children are yoked together with iron and steam. The animal machine—breakable in the best case, subject to a thousand sources of suffering—is chained fast to the iron machine that knows no suffering and no weariness."

Child labour was undoubtedly the worst of the many evils of the Industrial Revolution. It was not a novelty, but the new conditions greatly aggravated the evil. As has already been shown, a great part of the poor at this date were "paupers," *i.e.* receivers of support from the rates. As each parish was responsible for raising its own poor rate, it did its best to get rid of its superfluous poor. The law allowed the parish authorities to apprentice the children of paupers to any trade in any part of the country; and the manufacturers, especially the water-power manufacturers with mills in unpopulated valleys, were crying out for cheap labour. "It is a very common practice," writes a contemporary in 1811, "to bind children in large numbers to mill-owners two hundred miles away. The children, sent off by wagon-loads at a time, are as much lost for ever to their parents as if they were shipped off to the West Indies." The condition of these children was, in fact, indistinguishable from slavery. There were then no laws to protect infant labour, to secure education, health, or good treatment; and the ordinary day's work lasted nearly twice as long as the normal length of adult factory labour to-day.

The first Factory Act, for the limitation of hours and the exclusion of children under nine, was introduced in the House of Commons by two philanthropic factory owners in 1815, and it was rejected. The story of the long struggle to secure decent conditions in industry belongs to the next period. So long as Napoleon was at large, the energies of the nation were concentrated on the single purpose of defeating him. The mill-owners played a great part in creating the wealth without which that victory could not be secured, and so long as the mill-owners declared child labour to be essential to profit-making, the philanthropists agitated in vain.

CHAPTER IX

LITERATURE, ART, MUSIC

If leisure is as important as work, entertainment as important as industry, then the eighteenth century may lay claim to a second invention as important as the steam engine, namely, the novel. No one has ever succeeded in framing a satisfactory definition of the novel, but, as we all know one when we see it or read it, that does not very much matter. Prose fictions on an extended scale were composed long before the eighteenth century, *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* for example, but anyone can see that these are not, strictly speaking, novels. Our first great English novel is Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), but even that is not quite a novel; it is more like a fictitious autobiography. Seven years later comes Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, another fictitious autobiography, and a satire on the whole human race. At the other end of our period, in 1814, was published the first of the *Waverley Novels*. We must now very roughly bridge the ninety-five years between *Robinson Crusoe* and *Waverley*.

The novelists

The first of the great sentimental novelists was Samuel Richardson. He was of humble birth, and earned coppers as a boy by writing love-letters for illiterate maid-servants. His masterpiece, *Clarissa* (1748), is a tale of Virtue in distress, narrated entirely in letters. "Decoyed from her home by the wiles of a professional seducer, Lovelace, a rake so brilliant and witty and reckless as to win the hearts, if not of Clarissa, of all Richardson's lady readers, Clarissa is exposed to the last extremity of misery, steadily refuses to marry the scoundrel who has wronged her, and dies slowly among the sobs of the congregation."[1] Richardson's work provoked the

[1] Andrew Lang, *History of English Literature*, p. 459.

contempt of Henry Fielding, an admirable London magistrate, who wrote a series of robust, rollicking, humorous novels, of which the best is *Tom Jones* (1744). Smollett, with *Roderick Random* and *Peregrine Pickle*, was another master of the style of manly adventure, whose books, long after, were the youthful inspiration of Charles Dickens. More widely read to-day, perhaps, than any of these is Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*, a charming tale of the misfortunes, matrimonial and pecuniary, of the family of an excellent country parson. Tears are shed profusely in Goldsmith's novel, but that was the way of our ancestors. Even Pitt and Burke shed tears on occasion in the House of Commons. Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* is an extraordinary conglomeration of eccentricity, humour, and naughtiness by a very improper clergyman; its admirable characters, Corporal Trim and My Uncle Toby, are still household words. Then began the vogue of lady novelists, Miss Burney with *Evelina*, Mrs. Radclyffe with her tales of mystery and horror, and—far the greatest—Jane Austen. Her *Pride and Prejudice*, which every one can read with delight, appeared in 1813. Two features of Miss Austen's novels have often been remarked on; first, that none of her clergymen betray any interest in religion, and secondly, that none of her heroes seem to feel any inclination to serve their country in the war against Napoleon. "Officers," it is true, appear, but they are generally bad characters! Then with the end of the war and of our period comes the beginning of the *Waverleys*, and the vogue of the historical novel.

Johnson and his circle

The central figure of our eighteenth-century literature is Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709–1784), and with Johnson's name is inseparably linked that of James Boswell. "Bozzy" studied his idol, note-book in hand, whenever he got an opportunity during their twenty years' friendship, and ultimately produced what is the best biography in our own or, perhaps, any other language. No book of equal length has been re-read so many times by those who have read it once. Johnson's conversation, as recorded by Boswell, is more entertaining than any

of Johnson's own works, but even without Boswell he would survive as a very great figure. His *Dictionary* was the first adequate catalogue of our language, and his essays and biographies, though sometimes ponderous in style, are crammed full of massive wisdom. But the man was greater than his works—a great Christian and a great "character."

Among the other great prose writers of Johnson's age were his friend Burke, of whom we have already spoken (p. 409), Adam Smith, and Edward Gibbon. Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776) is one of the books that taught statesmen their own business and through them made history. "We are all your pupils," said Prime Minister Pitt on a famous occasion, when proposing the health of this quiet old Scottish professor. Adam Smith laid the foundations of clear thought on matters of commercial policy, and founded the new science of political economy.[1] Gibbon, a scholarly and humorous bachelor residing for the most part on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, devoted over twenty years to the composition of his enormous masterpiece, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, which carries the story of Rome from the days of the first Emperors to the capture of Constantine's capital by the Turks in 1453. Those who fight shy of *The Decline and Fall* may enjoy the quintessence of a Gibbonism in his *Autobiography*, an exquisitely entertaining book.

To the same generation belong the only English plays written during the long interval between Shakespeare and Bernard Shaw, which can still hold their own and pay their producers on the stage—Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, and Sheridan's *Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*. Goldsmith was an intimate friend of Johnson, and Sheridan an intimate friend of Fox and Burke, whom he assisted in the impeachment of Warren Hastings.

During the hundred years between 1714 and 1815 poetry

[1] In France a group of writers had begun to open up the same field of thought a few years before the publication of Smith's book. Among them was Turgot.

underwent an amazing transformation, called the Romantic Revival. We open with Pope, the poet of wit, elegance, and urbanity. He tells us that "The proper study of mankind is Man," and by Man Pope means civilised man, mainly resident in the West End of London. When we end, Shelley has already begun his brief career—Shelley, the poet of clouds and skylarks, of storms and spirits, of vast solitudes and impossible aspirations.

Poetry from Pope to Shelley

Pope was a great poet in his way, though he lacked nearly all the emotional attributes that we associate with poetry; he was, in fact, first and foremost, a satirist. His works present an interminable succession of "rhyming heroic" couplets, neat, glittering, and as cool as cucumbers.

> "The skilful nymph reviews her force with care:
> Let spades be trumps, she says! and trumps they were!"

But when the ponderous and the tedious undertook to turn the handle of Pope's "rhyming-machine," the result was a devastating dullness. Yet even the "rhyming machine" could yield a tender and romantic melody in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* (1764). We have already mentioned this delightful Irishman among the novelists and the playwrights. His best poem shows us the new spirit of romance still wearing the disguise of the old form and the old vocabulary.

> "Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain!
> Where health and plenty cheered the labouring swain."

He writes, you observe, in the past tense, for

> "Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates and men decay. . . .
> But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
> Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain."

It is a poet's comment on the agrarian revolution: but the favourite passages of the poem are the charming descriptions of the old village characters, the parson and the village schoolmaster. Critics have disputed whether "Auburn" was

in England or in Ireland; no doubt the poet drew on memories from both countries.

But before Goldsmith wrote his poem, poets had begun to break away from the eighteenth-century style altogether. Gray's famous *Elegy* had been published six years before Wolfe quoted it on his way to the night attack upon the Heights of Abraham. Still more remarkable in its complete defiance of the Popian tradition is Collins' *Ode to Evening* (1746), one of the most surprising and beautiful poems in the language, written in an original unrhymed stanza. It is hard to choose a single verse for quotation, as the long dreamy sentences meander on from verse to verse. We will start in the middle of a sentence. The nymph of "Evening" is addressed:

> "And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires;
> And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
> Thy dewy fingers draw
> The gradual dusky veil."

If this had been written yesterday, we should still say, "How modern!" In the last quarter of the century William Cowper explored on a more extended scale the resources of simple natural country life as poetic material. He also wrote *John Gilpin*, *The Loss of the Royal George*, and some well-known hymns. He was, in fact, a disciple, some say a victim, of the new Evangelical religious enthusiasm, and thus connects up with another strand of our history.

Interest in the wild barbaric past led a Scotsman named Macpherson to produce (1760) what he called a translation from the works of the old Gaelic bard, Ossian. The literary world waxed furious in controversy over the genuineness of these poems. Dr. Johnson sided with the sceptics: when asked if any modern man could conceivably have invented the poems he replied, "Yes, Sir; many men, many women, and many children." "Ossian" was, in fact, a forgery, but it had many admirers, among them Napoleon Bonaparte. In 1765 Bishop Percy published a collection of the old ballads, and before the end of the century Robert Burns had electrified Scotland and interested England by his lyrics and

ballads in dialect. In 1787 Blake, an original genius if ever there was one, published his *Songs of Innocence*, and in 1798 Wordsworth and Coleridge produced their joint volume, *Lyrical Ballads*, containing Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*. Before Waterloo both Byron and Shelley had begun to write, and Keats was about to begin.[1]

The painters

Until the eighteenth century England had imported her painters, usually from the Netherlands—Holbein under Henry VIII, Vandyck under Charles I, and Lely under Charles II. The first great English painter is Hogarth (1697–1764), whose vigorous and cruel scenes—*The Rake's Progress*, *The Election*, *The Gin Drinker*—remind us of the essential barbarism that underlay the polished surface of eighteenth-century life. That polished surface is immortalised in the portraits of Reynolds, the first President of the Royal Academy, and of Gainsborough. Both these belong to the generation of Johnson and Goldsmith. Contemporary with Wordsworth and Coleridge are the great masters of landscape, Constable and Turner. Constable, it has been said, gives us the prose and Turner the poetry of landscape; Constable is firmly and solidly English, while Turner, though he painted much in England, drew perhaps his finest inspiration from the mists and mysteries of Venice.

Music: Handel

The story of music is the reverse of the story of painting. In Tudor and Stuart times we had produced a multitude of great musicians, but English music in the eighteenth century is dominated by the superb genius of the German Handel, who first visited England in 1710 and thereafter spent the greater part of his long life in this country, dying in "the year of victories," 1759. *The Messiah* was first performed in Dublin, in 1742. George II was among his most devoted admirers, but, perhaps for this very reason, Handel had a long and bitter struggle before he won the allegiance of the British public. Once he had won it, however, he retained it for a hundred and fifty years. Germany continued to produce her long line of great masters;

[1] Examples of the seven famous poets mentioned in the last three sentences can, of course, be found in any anthology.

Bach, Handel's exact contemporary, followed by Mozart, and, after Mozart, Beethoven. For England Handel remained in the sphere of music what Shakespeare is in the sphere of drama, the one unrivalled master. In early Victorian times Mendelssohn appeared and was enthroned beside Handel, or only a little below him. To-day we have a much wider outlook, but in so far as our wider outlook has led us to depreciate Handel, we are not wiser than our ancestors.

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D. 1714. *George I.*
„ 1716. The Septennial Act.
„ 1718. Battle of Cape Passaro.
„ 1720. The South Sea Bubble.
„ 1721–42. Ministry of Walpole.
„ 1727. *George II.*
„ 1739. "War of Jenkins' Ear" begins.
„ 1743. Battle of Dettingen.
„ 1745. Battle of Fontenoy, The "Forty-five."
„ 1748. Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.
„ 1754. Newcastle succeeds Pelham as Prime Minister.
„ 1756–63. The Seven Years' War.
„ 1759. The "Year of Victories."
„ 1760. *George III.*
„ 1763. Treaty of Paris.
„ 1765. The Stamp Act.
„ 1770–82. North Prime Minister.
„ 1775–83. War of American Independence.
„ 1776. The Declaration of American Independence.
Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations.*
Watt's first steam engine.
„ 1778. France joins the American colonies.
„ 1782. Irish Parliament secures "legislative independence."
„ 1783. Treaty of Versailles.
„ 1783–1801. Pitt Prime Minister.
„ 1789. The French Revolution begins.
„ 1793–1802. War with French Revolution ending in Treaty of Amiens.
„ 1798. Battle of the Nile.
Irish Rebellion.
„ 1800. Union of Great Britain and Ireland.
„ 1803–14. War with Napoleonic France.
„ 1805. Battles of Trafalgar and Austerlitz.
„ 1807. Treaty of Tilsit.
„ 1808. Peninsular War begins.
„ 1815. Battle of Waterloo.

BOOK VI

THE VICTORIAN PERIOD AND AFTER, TO THE EVE OF THE GREAT WAR

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(i) Up to the Great Reform Bill (1815–1832)

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Appendix

CHAPTER I

AFTER WATERLOO

A GREAT war, even though it end in a glorious victory, is almost bound to be followed by a period of distress and depression. The country will be impoverished, for the war will have involved high taxation, and the money raised by this taxation will have been expended not, like much of the revenue of peace time, on the welfare of the people at home, but on the injury of the enemy abroad. But even high taxation will not have sufficed to pay for the war, and vast sums will have been raised by loans. Interest has to be paid on these loans after the war is over, so that taxation cannot return to its pre-war level. The National Debt had risen during the wars with Revolutionary France from £240,000,000 to £850,000,000. These figures appalled our ancestors, and seem to have given Napoleon some consolation in his defeat. "I have left in her flanks," he said, "a poisoned dart. It is I who have made her National Debt, which will ever burden, if not crush, future generations." Again, peace after a great war inevitably brings to a sudden termination a species of apparent prosperity which war itself produces. During the war there is at any rate little unemployment, for everyone is busy making the instruments of warfare: war taxation creates war industry. Then war industry stops dead, peace industry fails to fill its place, and peace seems in some ways even harder to bear than the war had been.

The cost of war

George III never heard the news of the battle of Waterloo. Though his reign was not officially concluded till 1820, he was now but a living corpse, deaf, blind and insane. His place was filled by the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV, who has been accurately described

The Royal Family

as "a bad son, a bad husband, a bad father, a bad subject, a bad monarch and a bad friend." As for George IV's six brothers, the Duke of Wellington expressed the general opinion when he said, "They are the damnedest millstones about the necks of any government that can be imagined." The best of them was the Duke of York, who had done useful work at the War Office during the war, but he owes his enormous monument at the bottom of Regent Street to the fact that he was the leader of the opposition to Catholic Emancipation. Another was the future William IV, a kindly but comical old man, nicknamed Silly Billy. Yet another was the Duke of Kent, the father of Princess Victoria, born four years after Waterloo. It was her destiny to rescue the royal family from its degradation and to win for it a love and honour unparalleled in history.

The government of the country remained for six years (1815–1821) in the hands of the group of Tory statesmen who had carried the war through to its triumphant conclusion:—Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, who formerly, as head of the War Office, had supplied the men and munitions for Wellington's Peninsular army; Lord Castlereagh, the great Foreign Secretary; Lord Sidmouth, who long before, as Mr. Addington, had negotiated the Treaty of Amiens; and Lord Eldon, the Lord Chancellor, a very great lawyer and a very bigoted Tory. These men had survived into a world they did not understand. During the long war new developments in industry and agriculture—what we call the Industrial and Agrarian Revolutions—had created social conditions which cried aloud for reform. But the government had no notions of reform. They could only meet discontent and riot with repression. Parliament in those days of limited franchise and rotten boroughs represented only a small fraction of the people of the country. Consequently a demand arose, as it had never risen before to anything like the same extent, for the *democratising* of parliament, "one man one vote," manhood suffrage as it was called. The leaders of this party

The Government and the Radicals

called themselves "Radicals," but, naturally enough, they very seldom succeeded in getting elected members of parliament. They represented not the voters but the voteless.

In 1819 a Radical named Hunt arranged to address a vast open-air meeting in St. Peter's Field, outside Manchester. During his speech the Manchester magistrates ordered the troops, which they had in readiness, to disperse the crowd. Several persons were killed, and some hundreds suffered injuries in the stampede which followed. This "victory" was hailed, in bitter derision, by the name of Peterloo. But the government upheld the magistrates and carried through parliament the so-called Six Acts, one of which declared all public meetings to be illegal unless they were summoned by a magistrate. The result was to discourage moderate Reformers and encourage criminal fanatics. In 1820 there was a plot, called the Cato Street conspiracy, to assassinate the whole Cabinet during a dinner-party. In 1822 Lord Castlereagh committed suicide. It was a tragic close to the career of a great patriotic statesman. But Castlereagh's services in maintaining our defence against Napoleon were forgotten. The London mob thought of him only as the strongest member of the most repressive of governments, and they greeted his coffin with savage jeers as it passed on its way to Westminster Abbey.

What were the problems for which the Tory government offered no solutions? To answer that question we must briefly recapitulate what was said earlier in this volume about the Agrarian and Industrial Revolutions.

Though the new industrial towns of the North had already begun their rapid and hideous growth, agriculture was still far the greatest industry of the country.

Agriculture

The Napoleonic war had been, for agriculture, a period of great prosperity. Military campaigns devastated broad tracts of Europe, from which a brisk demand arose for British food-stuffs. At home, population, and consequently food demand, grew more during the twenty-two

years of war than during the whole of the preceding century.[1] Increased demand was met by increased supply, owing to improvements in methods of sowing crops and breeding animals. But these improvements led in their turn to a revolution in the system of land-ownership, which impoverished the poor and diverted all the profits of improved methods and enlarged markets to the comparatively rich.

Up to about 1760 the greater part of the agricultural land of the country had been "unenclosed." The bulk of the land of a typical village consisted of one great hedgeless open tract, on which each villager had his own rights—rights of common pasture, rights to a share in the produce of the common meadow, and also his own scattered strips of arable land. Farming was a co-operative undertaking of the whole village, carried on according to traditions handed down from the remote past. Its only object had been to supply the needs of the village. But the new inventions and the new markets rendered this system intolerable to the more intelligent. It was impossible to take advantage of the new methods if one was bound in partnership with every fool in the village. So the demand for "enclosure" arose, and, village by village, the old agricultural system was, by a succession of Acts of Parliament, swept off the map in the course of the eighty years between the accession of George III and the accession of Victoria.

The result of enclosure was that the old "open field" was divided into a number of private properties, each villager receiving a piece of land supposedly proportionate to his existing rights. Even when the distribution was fairly carried out—as often it was not—the poorer partners had no chance under the new system. They sold out, and became propertyless wage-earners. Farming improved, but the security of the agricultural poor was undermined.

[1] It used to be maintained that this marked increase in the rate of growth of population (which was maintained throughout the nineteenth century) was due to an increase of births; but it now appears that it was chiefly due to a lowering of the death-rate, which was a result of the improvement of medical science and practice.

Agriculture, in fact, became a modern commercial industry, and the poor man, now a wage-labourer, had no trade union to prevent his wages from being ground down below the starvation point. To remedy this state of affairs the county magistrates had devised a system of doles,[1] which in the long run did more harm than good. Wages were subsidised out of the rates when they fell below a certain level. The result was that wages fell, rates rose, and the poor remained as poor as before.

After Waterloo the prosperity of agriculture, in so far as it was a product of war conditions, came to an end, and English landowners, who had during the war been exporters, found themselves faced by the competition of foreign imports in the English markets. However, parliament in those days was mainly controlled by the landlords, and in 1816 a Corn Law was enacted which excluded foreign corn except when a bad harvest sent up English prices beyond a certain figure. The benefits of the Corn Law went to the landlord and the tenant farmer: its hardships, in so far as it artificially raised the price of food, were felt most severely by the poor. **The Corn Law**

Another circumstance made the situation worse. The new spinning factories destroyed the old cottage industry of spinning by which the families of the poor had supplemented their incomes.

Was it surprising that, under these circumstances, the peasant took to poaching? Not at all; and if he did he ran up against the Game Laws. No one who was not a landowner was allowed to kill or sell game, and "game" in those days included rabbits. In 1816 (the year of the Corn Law) a ferocious Act was passed, which punished with transportation for seven years any person who should be found by night in any open ground, having in his possession any "net or engine for the purpose of destroying any hare, rabbit or other game." But men with starving families were prepared to take the risks. Hundreds **The Game Laws**

[1] Called the Speenhamland system, because it was first adopted by the Berkshire magistrates in 1795 at a village of that name (p. 452).

of poachers were sent to Botany Bay. It used to be a joke against our Australian cousins that some of them were descended from convicts. But many of these convicts were honest fellows who were offered no choice between poaching and starvation, and are ancestors no one need be ashamed of.

Thirty-nine years had passed, at the date of Waterloo, since James Watt constructed his first successful steam engine. Twenty-six years had passed since cotton-spinning by steam-driven machinery was first established in Manchester. While Britain fought the Political Revolutionists of France, her own Industrial Revolution pursued its headlong course, laying the foundations, no doubt, of a prosperity hitherto undreamed of, but ruthlessly destroying, first in one trade and then in another, the security of folk accustomed to earn their livings by the exercise of the old handicrafts. To these the new machines seemed simply devices for taking the bread out of the poor man's mouth. The last years of the war were marked by the machine-breaking riots, commonly called "Luddite" riots, from the name of a half-witted machine-breaker of Leicestershire.[1] If we are to realise what the Industrial Revolution meant to the bulk of those directly affected by it a hundred years ago we must try to form some conception of what the new industrial towns were like.

The new towns

The old towns of England had many faults: they were, by modern standards, crowded and insanitary, and their so-called self-government was usually in the hands of a few privileged families, sleepy, stupid and corrupt. None the less these old towns had for centuries been homes of civilisation, and their citizens were intensely proud to belong to them. At the centre stood a cathedral, gorgeously adorned with the lost arts of the Middle Ages. When there was no cathedral there would be dignified churches, a fine old guild-hall, a market hall. The very houses were made

[1] The curious story of the name "Luddite" can be found under that heading in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

beautiful and interesting by the skill and craftsmanship of past generations. The new towns were dominated by the chimneys of factories instead of by the spires of churches. They were mere barracks of industry. The streets of houses had been run up wholesale in the cheapest and ugliest of styles by the mill-owners, who let them to their work-people. In most of them the inhabitants had no rights of self-government; they were, in fact, not citizens in the proper sense, only employees. Some employers there were, such as the Strutts of Derbyshire and Robert Owen of New Lanark near Glasgow, who made splendid use of the immense powers that the new conditions thrust into their hands. Such men as these used their profits for the welfare of their work-people, providing not only good houses but schools, libraries, swimming-baths and playing fields. But such employers were few, and when Owen left New Lanark and sought to convert his fellow-employers to his methods he was denounced as a dangerous fanatic.

The Church

We should look, I suppose, to the Church of England as the keeper of the national conscience. But the Church of 1815 seemed to have nothing to say about the social problems of the day. There was within the Church a minority of vigorous and deeply religious men, called the Evangelicals, who had caught the inspiration of Wesley and his disciples in the previous century. But the Evangelicals, led by Wilberforce, seemed at present to be wholly occupied with foreign missions and the problem of negro slavery, and to regard as outside their province the conditions under which the poor lived at home. And the Evangelicals were a minority. The majority of the leaders of religion lacked enthusiasm for any great cause. Bishops were generally selected from among the relations or the college tutors of statesmen and noblemen. They were immensely wealthy, for they generally held a plurality of appointments, combining a bishopric in one diocese with a deanery in another, and two or three rich livings scattered about the country. The parish clergy often held more than one living, and many did not reside in the parishes from

which they drew their incomes. The typical parson was a sportsman and a good fellow, but little more. He shared all the blindness and the prejudices of the upper class to which socially he belonged.

There were a few who were alive to the social evils and social injustices of the age and were eagerly promoting various schemes of reform. We have already mentioned the public-spirited employers, like Owen and the Strutts. In parliament there were a few ardent philanthropists like Whitbread, an old Etonian and a wealthy brewer, who brought forward Bills, always defeated, to provide education, to regulate wages, or to control the labour of children. Others, such as Lancaster and Bell, were already engaged in organising charitable schools for the poor. William Cobbett, a self-made man from a peasant home, had already made his mark as a formidable agitator, the most powerful and the most honest of popular journalists. In his *Political Register*, nicknamed Twopenny Trash, he fought for the rights of the poor, especially the poor peasantry. His style was violent, but his policy was sound. He set himself to educate his readers in politics, and to teach them to agitate for parliamentary reform, so that the English parliament might indeed represent the people of England and not only the upper classes. But these men and others were as yet but voices crying in the wilderness. The great liberal and democratic forces that slowly transformed nineteenth-century England had not yet been generated.

Reformers

CHAPTER II

ENGLISH POLITICAL HISTORY (1815–1914)

In this chapter we shall make a rapid journey through about a hundred years of what is commonly called "politics." We shall watch Whigs and Tories, Liberals and Conservatives alternating between Government and Opposition in a kind of endless cricket match. We shall see first one famous statesman and then another rising to power as the foremost representative of his country. We shall meet first one problem, then another assuming prominence as a subject of often angry debate getting itself settled by some Act of Parliament, and passing out of view among the crowd of things that are accepted and taken for granted. It will be found, one may hope, an interesting story, a picturesque panorama of great men and great events; but it would be idle to pretend that it is very easy to grasp as a whole. Indeed it is more difficult to get a clear idea of the subject of the present Book of this History than that of any of the Books that have preceded or will follow it. The period does not seem to divide itself up into convenient sections. There are few well-marked crises, few natural pauses where we can say that one story ends and another one begins. The topics seem miscellaneous, and it is hard to discern the plot or outline of the whole. Our nineteenth-century history is like a smooth but rapid stream. There are no cataracts—no revolutions—and the scenery on the banks changes so imperceptibly that we hardly notice it change. But when we have got to the end and look back, we realise what an enormous distance we have travelled, a far greater distance, perhaps, than we had travelled in any of those earlier

"Progress"

centuries that seemed to contain so many more revolutionary events.

It was in all respects a period of unprecedented growth. At the beginning the population of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) was under thirteen millions; at the end it was over forty millions. For the first thirty years the growth of wealth was perhaps slower than the growth of population—the 1840's were notorious as the "hungry 'forties"; but after that wealth shot ahead and each unit of the forty millions of 1914 had, on an average, a greater command of wealth than each unit of the thirteen millions of 1815. The revenue of the government, the "Budget" as we call it, stood at about £50,000,000 a year during the forty years between Waterloo and the Crimean War. Then it jumped to £70,000,000 and continued to rise, first slowly and then rapidly, till it touched £200,000,000 just before the Great War. Yet the country found it far easier to pay £200,000,000 in 1914 than to pay a quarter of that amount in 1816. The National Debt had, it is true, only been very slightly reduced; but what had seemed a crushing burden at the beginning of the period was hardly noticed at the end.

If we pass beyond statistics of mere wealth and numbers the changes are equally striking. In 1815 only a small fraction of the population could read, and the State did not spend a penny on education; in 1914 education was compulsory for all up to the age of fourteen, and there were free schools in every town and village. In 1815 only a small fraction of the people possessed the parliamentary vote; half the members for English constituencies, and all the members for Scottish constituencies, were nominated by great landowners or by the government. In 1914 practically every man had the vote and "votes for women" was one of the burning questions of the day. In 1815 trade unions were illegal; in 1914 they were the most powerful bodies in the country. It is hardly necessary to speak here of the triumphs of invention. In 1815 nothing travelled faster than a stage coach; by the middle of the period persons and goods

travelled at the speed of a railway train, and news at the speed of electricity.

If we look beyond England we find transformations equally striking. In 1815 emigration to Canada had hardly begun, Australia meant little more than Botany Bay, South Africa little more than Cape Town, recently conquered from the Dutch. All these were reckoned less important than the island of Jamaica. In 1914 the total white population in the Great Dominions alone was as great as the population of the mother country had been in 1815.

Behind the incidents of politics which will fill the chapter that now follows, we must keep in mind this continuous, accelerating and apparently irresistible, certainly unprecedented, *growth*:—growth in numbers, in wealth, in empire, in mechanical appliances and the comforts they provide; growth, finally, political and social, in the direction of complete democracy.

(i) *Up to the Great Reform Bill* (1815–1832)

The first six or seven years after Waterloo were a time of mere stagnation and repression, such as we have described in the first chapter. Typical events are the "battle" of Peterloo and the Six Acts. But in 1821 and 1822, though the Tory Lord Liverpool remained Prime Minister, new men entered his Cabinet and changed the spirit of his policy. Castlereagh died, Sidmouth resigned, Eldon's influence declined; Canning took over the Foreign Office, Peel became Home Secretary, and Huskisson became President of the Board of Trade. Foreign affairs we shall postpone till the end of the section, so that Canning does not concern us at present. Huskisson and Peel were both "liberal" or reforming Tories, and it is well at once to get rid of the idea that the so-called Liberal or Whig party was the only "reform" party of the nineteenth century, and that the Conservative or Tory party devoted itself to opposing change. Both parties were typically English in that they distrusted all general theories of reform, but were

Tory reformers

ready to remedy admitted evils in a practical manner as soon as they had convinced themselves that it was perfectly "safe" to do so. One may ask then, what was the difference, what was the dividing line between nineteenth-century Whigs and Tories? That is an almost impossible question to answer. In each generation each party took its character from some leading statesman or group of statesmen, and often what was first proposed by one party was carried out by the other.

To-day our chief tax is the income tax. In Huskisson's day there was no income tax. It had been introduced as a war tax during the Revolutionary war, and had been dropped in response to the clamour of the income-tax payers (who were, of course, the comparatively wealthy) as soon as the war was over. The chief sources of income were customs and excise, duties on goods either imported or manufactured in the country. A writer of the day declared that everything was taxed, from the ribbons on a bride to the nails in a coffin, and economists, since Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, published fifty years before, had been pointing out that these duties throttled trade. Huskisson drastically cut down import duties, and encouraged trade with the colonies by the system known as "Preference"; that is to say, he reduced duties on imports from the colonies more than he reduced the duties on the same articles from foreign countries. When the policy of freeing trade was carried much further under Peel and Gladstone in the 'forties and 'fifties, Huskisson's "Preferences" disappeared. To-day we seem to be returning to his policy.

Huskisson

Another measure commonly associated with Huskisson was the legalising of trade unions (1824) by the repeal of the Combination Acts, which treated them as illegal conspiracies. But the credit for this Act should be given to Francis Place, a Radical agitator outside parliament. Very often in political history we should look behind the parliamentary leader who convinces parliament to the man of ideas who has first convinced the parliamentary leader.

This is particularly necessary in the case of Sir Robert Peel. Peel was a brilliant parliamentary manager, but he seems never to have had ideas of his own, and that was perhaps why the House of Commons, which dislikes "ideas," was so ready to trust him. Peel seemed "safe." The task of the genuine reformer was to convince Peel; when he had convinced Peel, Peel could be trusted to convince a majority. He was the son of a Lancashire mill-owner, the first representative of the Industrial Revolution to rise to the top of the political ladder, and he had already made his mark by the restoration of gold coinage in place of the paper money used during the war (1819). He was now persuaded to devote himself to a cause of which it is easier for the ordinary person to understand the importance, namely, the reform of the Criminal Law. At that date more than two hundred crimes were punishable by death, among them any theft from a shop valued at more than five shillings. The code was so monstrous that it defeated its own purpose, for juries refused, in the teeth of the evidence, to convict, when conviction entailed a sentence that humanity and common-sense disapproved of—a striking proof that "the man in the street" was wiser than his rulers. Peel secured the abolition of the worst of these savage punishments during the next few years.

Peel and Criminal Law

People had yet to learn that the best security against crime, apart from good social conditions, which is the best security of all, was not savage punishment but the probability of detection. At this date there was no professional police force in England, but in 1829 Peel instituted the Metropolitan Police Force for London, and it was copied throughout the rest of England in the following years.

Generally speaking we may say that throughout the nineteenth century criminal law became more and more humane and crime less and less abundant. Growing prosperity and every kind of social improvement contributed to the latter result. Among such improvements we may mention the

growth of the habit of tea-drinking as a substitute for alcohol, encouraged by Gladstone, who, in the course of a series of Budgets in the 'fifties and 'sixties, multiplied by four the tax on spirits and divided by four the tax on tea.

Leaving politics for a moment, we may note that three of the most famous institutions of modern London were founded during these years—the Zoological Gardens, the National Gallery, and the Library of the British Museum.

In 1827 Lord Liverpool was smitten by paralysis, and much the longest Prime Ministership of the nineteenth century came to an end. He was not a great man, but he had kept his party together. It now began to split into factions, which was a sign that the long spell of Toryism—it had lasted practically since George III installed the younger Pitt in 1783—was coming to an end. After brief ministries of Canning and Goderich, the Duke of Wellington became Prime Minister.

Catholic Emancipation

Ever since Pitt had carried the Union of the parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland, but had failed to carry Catholic Emancipation, the Catholic claim had been troubling British politics. Wellington's government was pledged to oppose it, yet pressure from outside compelled him to grant it. This pressure was not the gentle pressure of English public opinion but the violent pressure of threatened Irish rebellion. Daniel O'Connell, the popular Irish Catholic orator, had been, in spite of the law against Catholic M.P.'s, elected for the county of Clare. The Catholic Association, of which he was leader, had behind it three-quarters of Ireland. The Duke was an old soldier, and he knew when retreat was the lesser of two evils, and Peel was an expert in carrying measures he had previously opposed. So the Roman Catholics were admitted to parliament and to office by the Act of 1829, almost exactly half a century after the Gordon Riots. John Bull did not much like it, but he put up with it.

Since that date we have swept away all that remained of the ancient handicaps imposed upon those who did not

belong to the Church of England. In 1858 Jews [1] were admitted to parliament. In 1870 University degrees and fellowships were thrown open to all, irrespective of religious tests. In 1886 avowed atheists were admitted to parliament. To-day it comes as a surprise to realise how comparatively recent these triumphs of toleration are.

Parliamentary reform

In 1830 George IV died and, as the law stood then, a General Election followed as a matter of course. The scandal of rotten boroughs and the absurdity of the mediæval distribution of constituencies, which allowed no representatives to the new centres of industrial wealth, had been more and more talked about during the fifteen years since Waterloo. Radical agitators like Hunt and Cobbett advocated "manhood suffrage." Such ideas were abhorrent to the leaders of both Whigs and Tories, but the leaders of the Whigs and a certain section of the Tories had come to the conclusion that it was absolutely necessary to take the wind out of Radical sails by granting some measure of "moderate" Reform.[2] The Whigs gained some seats at the election, and when the new parliament met and Wellington declared himself opposed to all schemes of Reform, Melbourne, Palmerston and other disciples of Canning deserted him. Wellington resigned, and Lord Grey became Prime Minister. He had been an advocate of Reform ever since, as a young man, he had followed the lead of Fox in the early days of the Revolution. His chief assistant in the formidable task now before him was, like himself, an aristocrat of ancient family, Lord John Russell. Indeed the Whig Cabinet that opened the road towards democracy consisted almost entirely of members of noble families.

The Whig Reform Bill did not introduce democracy—very far from it. But it abolished the merely rotten borough, where membership depended on nomination. Small towns

[1] *I.e.* Jews by religion. Men of Jewish race but Christian religion (*e.g.* Disraeli) suffered no disabilities.

[2] It is convenient to spell the word with a capital when used to denote "Reform" of the constitution of parliament, as distinct from reforms in general.

and villages lost their right to return members of their own. Large towns in which the vote had been restricted to the mayor and corporation had the franchise thrown open to all householders occupying houses rented at £10 a year. Seats taken from small towns and villages were given to new manufacturing towns and the larger counties. It was a middle-class measure, to enfranchise not "the people" in their millions but, as one of its authors said, "hundreds of thousands of respectable persons." Yet "the people," who were not to get the vote, organised demonstrations in favour of the Bill. Instinct told them that the first Reform Bill would not be the last.

As for the Bill, it needed all the support that popular demonstrations and even popular riots could give it. It was a stronger measure than most "moderate" reformers liked, and in 1831 it was defeated in the House of Commons. Grey persuaded William IV to dissolve parliament. The Whigs were returned with an increased majority and got the Bill through the Commons, but it was thrown out by the Lords. Popular excitement now began in earnest, and there were riots in Bristol and Nottingham. The Bill was introduced a third time, with some alterations, and rejected in the House of Lords by nine votes. Grey resigned, but Wellington failed to form a government. Once again Grey resumed office and the king consented to create, if necessary, enough peers to carry the Bill. Wellington then persuaded the Lords to allow it to pass. England was nearer to revolution in 1832 than at any date between the downfall of James II and the General Strike of 1926.

The Bill was intended as a final measure, but it proved far otherwise. The voteless began to agitate for complete democracy, or the People's Charter as it was called, before many years had passed. From 1850 onwards a "Second Reform Bill" was accepted as necessary by sections of both political parties, and was actually carried by the Conservatives in 1867. A third followed, securing a near approach to manhood suffrage, in 1885. Women obtained the vote in 1918.

After Waterloo Britain found herself a member, with her old allies, Austria, Prussia and Russia, of a Quadruple Alliance, the purpose of which was to maintain the treaties that had been made after the downfall of Napoleon against any attempts by France to upset them. But France was exhausted, and gave no further cause for alarm. Protests against the 1815 settlement came not from France, but from Spain and Naples, where the Liberal middle classes, who had imbibed some of the ideas of the French Revolution, resented the stupid despotic government of the restored royal families. Both these restored despots were Bourbons, and the restored Bourbons of France were quite as ready to support them against their subjects as the governments of Austria or Russia. In 1821 the four great continental Powers assembled in Congress at Laybach to deal with the Spanish and Neapolitan revolts. Castlereagh, the British foreign minister, disapproved of the policy of the Congress, and declared that Great Britain would have nothing to do with it.

Castlereagh's foreign policy

In 1822 Canning succeeded Castlereagh. The policies of these two famous ministers were the same in essentials, but their characters and methods were very different. Castlereagh was an aristocrat of the old school, who had no inclination to "take the people into partnership," and a great disinclination to give unnecessary offence to our former allies. Canning, on the other hand, was something of an adventurer, vain of popular applause. He delighted in putting his country—and himself—forward as the champion of other people's liberties, and defying continental despotisms in public speeches. He was unable to do anything effective for Naples or for Spain, but when the continental Powers began to talk of assisting Spain to reconquer her American colonies, which had been in rebellion for the last twelve years, Canning publicly intimated that any such expedition would have to meet the British fleet. Tyranny might be master in Europe, but it should not cross the seas. "I have called," said Canning

Canning and the New World

afterwards, "a New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old." That "I" is characteristic of Canning; he was a brilliant man but a self-advertiser.

Castlereagh had secured what must always be reckoned one of the greatest triumphs of the cause of peace, when he negotiated, in 1817 and 1818, treaties with the United States, by which the British and American fleets on the Great Lakes were abolished, and the long frontier between Canada and the States, unguarded by a single soldier on either side, drawn from the Lakes to the summit of the Rocky Mountains. Only four years before Britain and America had been at war. Over the Spanish question Britain and America found their interests identical, and while Canning was "calling a New World into existence," Monroe was issuing the famous pronouncement, since known as the Monroe Doctrine, asserting that America would regard as an unfriendly act any European intervention in any part of the American continent.

Meanwhile the Greeks were fighting for independence against the Turks, a cause which enlisted the sympathy of all who admired the masterpieces of ancient Greek art and literature. Shelley wrote a poem called *Hellas*, containing a famous song opening with the words

Greece

"The world's great age begins anew."

Byron not only celebrated *The Isles of Greece* in song, but went to Greece and died there. Canning welcomed the Greek revolt not only for its own sake, but also because it sowed seeds of discord between Austria and Russia, the two great continental despotisms. Britain, France and Russia favoured the Greek cause, and sent naval squadrons to enforce their mediation upon both Greeks and Turks, and Codrington, the British Admiral, destroyed the Turkish fleet at Navarino (1827). When the news reached England Canning was dead, and Wellington, who disapproved of his policy, withdrew the British squadron. But, with Russian help, Greece achieved independence.

When the Whigs took office in 1830 Lord Palmerston became Foreign Secretary, and his breezy and vigorous personality dominated British foreign policy for the next thirty-five years. Palmerston was a typical English gentleman of the old school. He had a strong sense of the greatness of his country and the greatness of the part she ought to play in the affairs of the world, combined with a very decided contempt for nearly all foreign governments. He was not always wise nor always successful, but his countrymen admired his skill and his pluck, and towards the end of his long career he had undoubtedly become the most popular British statesman since Pitt.

Palmerston and Belgium

As soon as Palmerston took office he was confronted with the problem of what we now call Belgium. Hitherto there had never been an independent state of that name. The population was part French-speaking (Walloon) and part Flemish, and it had been subject successively to Dukes of Burgundy, Kings of Spain, Austrian Emperors, French Revolutionists, and, since 1815, the King of Holland. In 1830 the French overthrew their despotic Bourbon king, Charles X, and established a constitutional monarchy under Louis Philippe. The Belgians thereupon rose against union with Holland, and a considerable party desired to make the son of Louis Philippe King of Belgium. Austria, Prussia and Russia were thoroughly alarmed at this outbreak of revolution, and there can be little doubt that, if the Belgians had persisted in a step which would mean virtual union with France, European war would have followed. Palmerston set himself to secure Belgian independence, and to prevent the accession of the son of Louis Philippe, which would have made Belgian independence impossible. He played his cards with great skill, and received valuable support from Talleyrand, the famous diplomatist of Napoleonic days, who was now French ambassador in London. A suitable Belgian king was found in Leopold of Coburg; the Great Powers, Holland and France, were induced to acquiesce; and finally (after long delays) the

famous treaty was signed whereby all the Powers undertook to respect and to defend Belgian neutrality.

Spanish America, Greece, Belgium—Great Britain had established what was to be henceforth her recognised position in Europe, that of champion of small nations against oppression. Sometimes, of course, that championship was of little practical value. In 1830 the Poles rose against Russian rule. Palmerston favoured the Poles, but he was not prepared to fight for them against the vast armies of the "Iron Tsar" Nicholas. So Poland was crushed, and Palmerston had a grievance against Nicholas, which he paid back with interest in the Crimean War twenty-four years later. Unhappily that did not help the Poles!

Poland

(ii) *After the Reform Bill to the Great Exhibition* (1833–1851)

The Reform Bill was naturally followed by a General Election, and the new voters, equally naturally, gave the Whigs a large majority. The first important measure of the reformed parliament was the abolition of slavery (1833), which completed the good work begun by the Act abolishing the slave trade in 1807. These two measures are the first notable example in our history of the power of a great voluntary organisation working to stir public opinion and, through public opinion, to secure political action. The Anti-Slavery Society found many imitators afterwards, such as the Anti-Corn-Law League, and, at a later date, the Woman Suffrage societies. It is also notable as the work of a definitely religious movement, which could trace its origin back to the beginnings of Wesley's crusade nearly a hundred years before. Abolition of slavery did not, of course, solve the problem of the right relations of white and black peoples. It led to prolonged troubles in the British West Indies, and in South Africa was the principal cause of the Great Trek and the establishment of the Dutch Republics.

Abolition of Slavery

The same year as saw the abolition of negro slavery in the British Empire witnessed a step forward in mitigating what some called "slavery in England." The first step towards controlling the conditions of labour in factories had been taken in 1816, when, in cotton factories only, the employment of children under nine was forbidden. Since then the cause of women and children in factories had been taken up by Lord Ashley, afterwards Lord Shaftesbury. He was an old-fashioned Tory and a devout Evangelical, who devoted a long life, lasting down to 1885, to a wide variety of philanthropic causes. By the Act of 1833 associated with his name (though it dissatisfied him as a far too moderate measure), the Act of 1816 was extended to all factories except silk factories, and the hours of work of "young persons" under eighteen was also limited. Another Act in 1842 prohibited the employment of women and of children under ten underground in mines, and an Act of 1847 prohibited the employment of all women and of boys under eighteen for more than ten hours a day in factories. An immense amount of hard work was required to convince parliament of the necessity for these measures. All the traditions of both parties were opposed to them. To-day we take state control and compulsion for granted in innumerable spheres of life; we have compulsory education and compulsory insurance. But the bulk of the reforming energies of eighty or a hundred years ago were moving in the opposite direction. Peel's contemporaries regarded state control as an evil relic of the past, and were moving towards "freedom," whether in trade or in religion. The Factory reform movement was a movement *against* the stream of reform in general. It will be noticed that Ashley's Acts say nothing about the hours of men; to limit the hours of full-grown men would have been regarded as a monstrous interference with the liberty of the men themselves; women and children only might have their hours limited as a concession to their weakness. Happily the legal curtailment of the hours of women and children usually involved in practice a curtailment of the men's hours also.

Ashley's Factory Acts

In 1834 parliament turned to a task which it found much more congenial than philanthropic Factory Acts, namely, the abolition of the philanthropic though unwise "Speenhamland" system which had supplemented wages out of rates (see p. 471). Rates had risen to extravagant heights, and it was absolutely necessary to bring them down by limiting public assistance to those who could not get work. By the new Act, called the Poor Law Amendment Act, workhouses were established, and those who wanted relief had to go to the workhouse. Wages were henceforth left to themselves. What philanthropic persons thought of the new workhouses may be learnt from Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, which was published four years later.

The Poor Law

In 1835 was passed the Municipal Corporations Act, which may be called the "Reform Bill" of local government. Henceforth towns enjoyed genuine self-government through Councils elected by the whole body of rate-payers. Country districts did not obtain the same privileges till 1888. They remained for another half-century under the government of magistrates, who were not elected but nominated by the Lords Lieutenant of the counties.

Local Government

Meanwhile Lord Grey had been succeeded as Prime Minister by Lord Melbourne, a charming man but a feeble Prime Minister, who is best remembered to-day as the old gentleman who gave Queen Victoria her first lessons in politics. Not much of first-rate importance happened during his ministry (1834–1841), except the establishment in 1839 of a general penny postage service, in place of the old high charges, varying like railway fares according to the distance travelled by the letter.

Melbourne's Ministry

In 1841 the Tories returned to power with Peel as their Prime Minister, and Peel set to work to abolish the remains of the old system of "protective" duties. When the task was completed, as it was by Gladstone about twenty years later, such import duties as remained, like the duties on tea and sugar, which could

Peel and the Income Tax

not be grown in England, were imposed for revenue purposes only, *i.e.* to raise money. Duties which aimed at keeping out foreign goods in order to enable British makers of the same goods to charge higher prices had all been abolished. This is what we call free trade. To compensate for the loss of revenue from import duties Peel re-established the Income Tax (1842) at sevenpence in the pound, and though it varied in amount in the years that followed, falling in the 'seventies to twopence, and rising in the years before the war to eighteenpence (on certain incomes), it was never abolished, and in all human probability it never will be.

The repeal of the Corn Law

By far the most formidable item in the old protective system was the Corn Law, which protected British agriculture, and the repeal of the Corn Law in 1846 involved a political crisis almost as exciting as the crisis over the Reform Bill. In 1838 Cobden and Bright, two manufacturers, had founded the Anti-Corn-Law League, which held "repeal" meetings all over the country. The town workers wanted "repeal" because it would mean cheap bread; the manufacturing employers wanted it because it would enable them to lower wages; the agricultural labourer was indifferent because none of the profits of agricultural protection seemed to come his way. Only the landlords stood firm for the maintenance of the Corn Law, but they were still, in spite of the Reform Bill, the strongest section in both Houses of Parliament. Peel had undertaken at the beginning of his ministry to retain the Corn Law, but he was gradually converted by Cobden's arguments. Then came the bad harvest of 1845 and the Irish potato famine, which convinced Peel that "repeal" ought not to be delayed. Russell, who was now leader of the Whig opposition, advocated total and immediate repeal. Peel resigned, but the Whig politicians were not at all anxious to form a government and undertake the task, for whichever party undertook it was likely to be split in two. So Russell "failed to form a Government" and Peel resumed office, and introduced the Bill.

The result was what both parties expected. Old-fashioned Tories had long been restive under Peel's leadership; they were mostly country gentlemen, and he was the son of a manufacturer. The country gentlemen found a leader in the brilliant Jewish novelist Disraeli, who denounced Peel's inconsistency in a series of the most scathingly witty speeches ever delivered in the House of Commons. "Repeal" was carried with the help of the Whig opposition, but two-thirds of the Tory party had revolted against the Tory Cabinet. Peel was defeated and resigned directly afterwards. His career was over. His immediate followers, among them Gladstone, became "Peelites," a small "middle party" which eventually drifted over into the Whig or Liberal camp. Disraeli became leader of the new Tory party, but it was nearly thirty years before they enjoyed a majority in the House of Commons.

Was the introduction of complete free trade and the abolition of agricultural protection a wise policy? That is one of those difficult questions which can only be answered after prolonged and skilled investigation. We will not attempt to answer it here. Certain it is that from the date of Peel's ministry onwards, British prosperity began to increase by leaps and bounds. The "hungry 'forties" were left behind. Some say this was due, at any rate in part, to the policy of free trade. Others say it was entirely due to other causes, such as railways. Certain it is that Britain flourished under free trade, and so long as it flourished there would be no demand for a return to protection. Protection did not, in fact, re-enter British politics until the early years of the twentieth century, when our markets were beginning to be seriously threatened by the rising industries of Germany and America. For the time being, and for many years to come, Britain was industrially ahead of all her rivals.

It is worth noticing that no one more vigorously opposed the repeal of the Corn Law than the landowner Lord Ashley, and no one more vigorously opposed the Factory Acts than the manufacturers Cobden and Bright.

One result of the growing prosperity was the decline of discontent among the voteless majority. The 'thirties had witnessed the first beginnings of British Socialism, under the leadership of Robert Owen, who had once been a philanthropic capitalist and had since become a revolutionary agitator. Owenite Socialism had a brief career, and was succeeded by Chartism, an attempt to organise a democratic demand for "the People's Charter," in which the main item was "manhood suffrage," or votes for all men. In 1848 revolutions broke out in France, Italy and Germany, and the Chartists were encouraged to make a great effort. Two hundred thousand Chartists were to march from Kennington Common to the House of Commons with a petition that was said to contain over five million signatures. The government (Russell being now Prime Minister) took full precautions; special constables were enrolled, and the Duke of Wellington had soldiers in readiness. But the Chartist procession was a failure, and the petition was found to contain only 2000 signatures, many of them written in the same handwriting, and bearing such unlikely names as Prince Albert, Duke of Wellington, Pugnose and Woodenlegs. Chartism was killed by ridicule, and revolutionary agitation did not reappear till the end of the century.

The Chartist fiasco

The fitting symbol of the new age that was opening was the Great Exhibition of 1851. The vast glass house now known as the Crystal Palace was erected in Hyde Park, and within it were collected specimens of all the wonders that mechanical invention had achieved. It was a vast advertisement of material progress, the opening, it was hoped, of a new and better age in which commerce would banish war from the civilised world—and yet the Crimean War was only three years distant, and a Prussian squire named Bismarck had already begun to meditate in private upon the future of Germany! In another respect also the Great Exhibition marks a new departure. It was, in the main, the work of Prince Albert. Queen Victoria was learning, under her husband's guid-

The Great Exhibition

ance, to play the part which we now associate with the royal family, as the representative of the nation in matters which, as Englishmen, we regard as beyond the sphere of controversy.

Palmerston was foreign minister throughout the ministries of Grey and Russell (1830–1841). When the Belgian crisis was over, his chief problems arose out of the activities of Mehemet Ali, the Khedive of Egypt. Mehemet Ali was a very able adventurer, who combined oriental savagery with modern efficiency. He had conquered the Soudan and founded Khartoum, but this was not enough for him. In 1832 he rebelled against his nominal master, the Sultan of Turkey, conquered Syria, and marched through Asia Minor, defeating the Turks at Konieh (Iconium). The Sultan was now thoroughly alarmed, and purchased the support of Russia by a treaty which practically gave her military and naval control of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. This Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi (1833) is a landmark in history because it marks the beginning of the period, lasting till the end of the century, during which Russian ambitions were reckoned as the chief menace to the British Empire. Before Waterloo the chief menace obviously came from France: after the end of the century, obviously from Germany.

Egypt and Turkey

Mehemet Ali was induced to withdraw from Asia Minor, but in 1839 war broke out again between Turkey and Egypt, and once again Mehemet Ali's armies carried all before them. Palmerston was now ready. He was determined to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and to rescue Turkey from dependence on Russia. Great Britain, Austria, Prussia and Russia agreed upon joint action. A British and Austrian fleet bombarded Acre. Mehemet Ali was restricted to Egypt, and Russia agreed to abandon the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi.

When Peel assumed office Palmerston got a five years' rest. The chief event of Peel's foreign policy was a Treaty with the United States which settled the frontier between Canada and the States from the Rocky Mountains to the

Pacific coast. Vancouver was declared a British colony, and British Columbia was established in 1858.

Palmerston returned to office when Russell became Prime Minister in 1846, and added immensely to his popularity by a singular performance known as the affair of Don Pacifico. Don Pacifico was a Gibraltar Jew and consequently a British subject. He lived in Greece, and was subjected to some maltreatment for which he failed to get redress from the Greek government. Palmerston at once took up his cause, sending a naval squadron to terrorise the Greek government into acting justly. In a long-famous speech in which he defended his conduct, Palmerston quoted the old Latin tag, *Civis Romanus sum*. British citizenship, like Roman citizenship, should protect its possessor in every quarter of the globe.

"Old Pam."

But Palmerston was not popular with his Cabinet colleagues, for he conducted his policy with very little reference to their wishes, and he gave even greater offence to the Queen and the Prince Consort, who regarded foreign policy as a subject on which the Crown should be always deferentially consulted. In December 1851 he gave his enemies a good excuse for getting rid of him. Prince Louis Napoleon, nephew of the great Napoleon and President of the recently established French Republic, had carried out a *coup d'état* by which he made himself master of France and brought republican government virtually to an end, though a year was yet to pass before he assumed the title of emperor. Palmerston congratulated Napoleon on his achievement without consulting either his colleagues or the Queen, and was at once dismissed from office. But "Old Pam," as he was coming to be called, was the most popular man in the country, and a few months later he got his revenge by securing the defeat of the government that had expelled him. A conservative government under Lord Derby held office for the next few months: it has no particular importance, except that it introduced Disraeli to high office.

(iii) *The Palmerstonian Era* (1852–1865)

For more than twenty years Palmerston had dominated our foreign policy; during the years now to be chronicled he was to dominate the whole range of our politics. A Coalition government of Whigs and Peelites under Lord Aberdeen (1852–1855) drifted into war with Russia and made a sad mess of it. An indignant nation called Palmerston to the helm, and for the next ten years (apart from a brief Conservative government in 1858–1859) Palmerston was Prime Minister, his power only terminating with his death at the age of eighty. The nation was in a self-satisfied, easy-going mood. Activity in domestic reform slackened and almost stopped. John Bull was content to sit back and watch the performances of his popular Prime Minister. But first, the Crimean War.

Nicholas of Russia had long fixed his eyes upon Turkey. "We have a sick man on our hands," he had said to Peel's government in 1844. He was convinced that "the sick man" was going to die, and there can be little doubt that the wish was father to the thought. If "the sick man" died, what would become of his possessions? Nicholas proposed to apply, in co-operation with Great Britain, the principles which his ancestors, in co-operation with Austria and Prussia, had applied to Poland. Let Britain annex Egypt, and let Russia assume control of the Baltic provinces south of the Danube—for Turkey in those days stretched to the Danube; there was no Bulgaria, and a minute Serbia was all that represented modern Jugo-Slavia. These Russian proposals excited horror and indignation in England, and our government began to cultivate friendship with the new Emperor of the French (Napoleon), who had reasons of his own for quarrelling with Russia, and was anxious above all things to secure the friendship of the Power whose antagonism had ruined his uncle.

Russia and Turkey

An absurd dispute was already raging between the Greek and Latin (Catholic) monks who shared the guardianship

of the Holy Places round Jerusalem. Russia championed the Greeks and Napoleon championed the Latins. In 1853 Nicholas raised another and more serious issue by demanding the right to protect the interests of all members of the Greek Church within the Sultan's dominions. These unhappy Christians were certainly in need of protection, but the Russian demand would in effect have made Turkey a protectorate within the Russian Empire. The negotiations might not have led to war but for the policy pursued by the British Ambassador at Constantinople, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. Stratford has been described as the last of the great ambassadors, and the description is just, for the telegraph has reduced the modern ambassador to the position of a mere mouthpiece of the government he serves. Stratford, however, pursued a policy of his own, based on personal hatred of the Tsar, and devotion to the Turks, with whom he had been long associated. He dragged his government into the Crimean War. But why did they allow themselves to be dragged? Because they were themselves hopelessly divided. Palmerston, who was Home Secretary in the Coalition government, supported Stratford. If the government dismissed Stratford, Palmerston would resign. If Palmerston resigned, the government would fall, and who would succeed it?—probably Palmerston! In fact the idea of a war with the wicked Russian despotism was coming to be welcomed by nearly all sections of the British public, and Palmerston represented the view of "the man in the street."

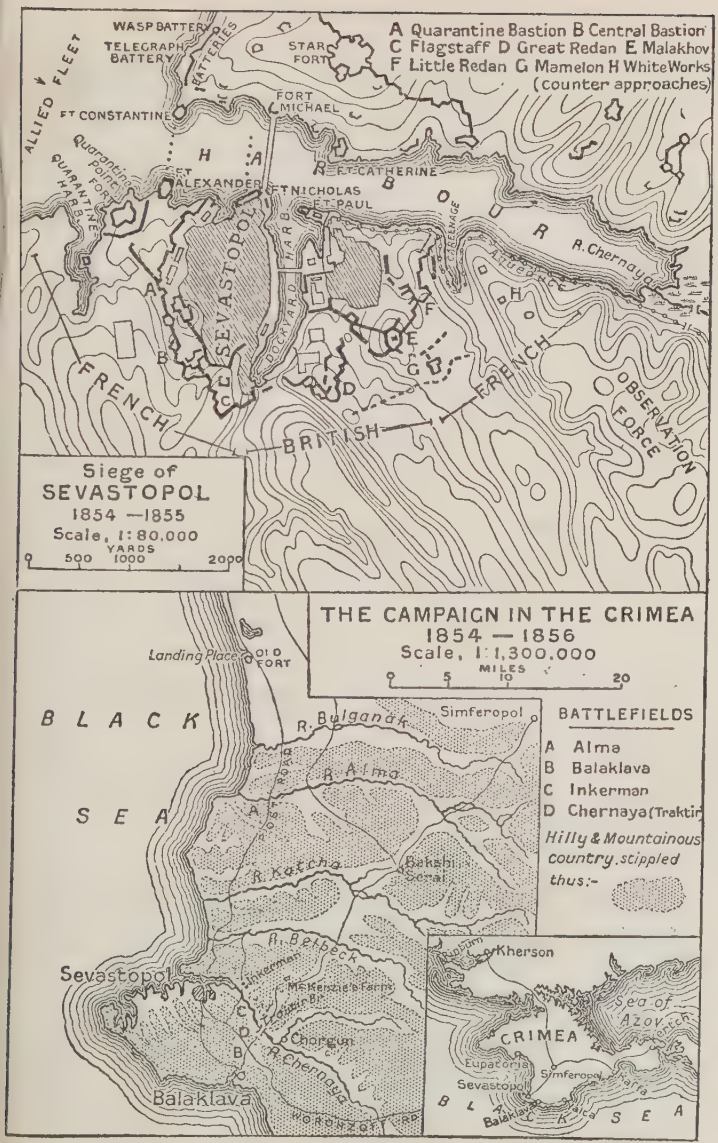
After tedious negotiations war was declared in March 1854 between Russia and the Allies,—Britain, France and Turkey. The cause of Russia's overweening power was conceived to be her Black Sea fleet; so the Allies determined that Sebastopol, the great naval arsenal of Russia in the Crimea, must be destroyed. Thus began the celebrated and terrible siege, which lasted almost exactly a year. The Allies landed thirty miles north of the fortress, and marched southwards, winning the battle of the Alma on the way. If they

The Crimean War

had gone straight on after the battle, Sebastopol would have fallen at once. But neither the British nor the French commanders were equal to the task in hand, and time was given for Todleben, the Russian engineer, to put Sebastopol in a position of defence. British headquarters were established at Balaklava, and defended against Russian attacks in the battles of Balaklava and Inkerman. In the first months of the war the British bore the brunt of the fighting, but as the siege wore on the French forces were increased till they greatly outnumbered our own, and it was they who took the chief part in the final operations that led to the fall of the city.

But between those early heroic battles and these later events had come "the Crimean winter," with its hardships so greatly increased by the inefficiency of War Office administration at home. Newspaper correspondents, especially Mr. Russell of *The Times*, revealed the horrors of war to the civilian public as they had never been revealed before, and the one great reputation made in the course of the war was that of Miss Florence Nightingale, who, amidst incredible difficulties, largely created for her by the military authorities, succeeded in bringing order, cleanliness and comfort into the base hospitals at Scutari, opposite Constantinople, which before her coming were a veritable death-trap. In the latter part of her long life Miss Nightingale used the prestige she had gained to elevate the art and profession of nursing all the world over.

But if suffering is to be measured by quantity, the sufferings of the Allies were far less than the sufferings of the Russians, who had no Mr. Russell to call attention to their woes. The British losses were 28,000; those of Russia were twenty times as great. The long winter marches of Russian reinforcements across the desolate plains on their way to the Crimea were almost as terrible as the French retreat from Moscow. It is said that out of every ten Russian soldiers despatched to the Crimea only one got home alive.


A Quarantine Bastion B Central Bastion
C Flagstaff D Great Redan E Malakhov
F Little Redan G Mamelon H White Works
(counter approaches)
WASP BATTERY
TELEGRAPH BATTERY
STAR FORT
FORT MICHAEL
FT CONSTANTINE
ALLIED FLEET
Quarantine Point
QUARANTINE HARBOUR
FT ALEXANDER
FT NICHOLAS
FT PAUL
FT CATHERINE
SEVASTOPOL
DOCKYARD HARBOUR
KARABELNAYA
INKERMAN
R. Chernaya
FRENCH
BRITISH
OBSERVATION FORCE
Siege of
SEVASTOPOL
1854 — 1855
Scale, 1:80,000
YARDS
500 1000 2000
THE CAMPAIGN IN THE CRIMEA
1854 — 1856
Scale, 1:1,300,000
MILES
5 10 20
Landing Place
OLD FORT
BLACK SEA
R. Bulganak
Simferopol
R. Alma
R. Katcha
Bakshi Serai
R. Belbeck
Sevastopol
Inkerman
McKenzie's Farm
Chorgun
R. Chernaya
Balaklava
BATTLEFIELDS
A Alma
B Balaklava
C Inkerman
D Chernaya (Traktir
Hilly & Mountainous country, stippled thus:-
Kherson
Sea of Azov
CRIMEA
Eupatoria
Simferopol
Sevastopol
Balaklava
BLACK SEA
Cribb & Co. del. et sc.

In the middle of the Crimean winter the Coalition government fell in disgrace, and Palmerston took the helm. By the Treaty of Paris (1856), which ended the war, Sebastopol was to cease to be a naval base; the Black Sea was neutralised, all ships of war being excluded from its waters, and Turkey was "admitted to participate in the advantages of the public law of Europe"; that is to say, she was recognised, in defiance of all the evidence to the contrary, as a civilised country: all her neighbours expressly renounced any right to interfere in her internal affairs, however she might treat her Christian subjects.

The Treaty of Paris

Subsequent history has not justified the wisdom of the statesmen of 1856. Russia has as much right to have a fleet at Sebastopol as Great Britain to have a fleet at Portsmouth, and in 1871, when France was crippled by her defeat at the hands of Prussia, Russia announced her intention of re-establishing her Black Sea fleet, and our statesmen acquiesced. They could hardly have done otherwise even if they had wanted to do so. As for the Turkish clauses, their absurdity was more quickly demonstrated. In 1860 France broke the treaty herself, in order to intervene on behalf of the Christians of Mount Lebanon.

The Indian Mutiny, which followed close upon the Crimean War, will be discussed as part of the history of India in another chapter.

The last years of Palmerston's career were marked by three great events in world-history; the establishment of the kingdom of Italy (1859–1860), the American Civil War (1861–1865), and the quarrel of Prussia and Denmark (1864), which proved the first step towards the establishment of the German Empire. These great events can only be fully understood in their proper context in the histories of Italy, America and Germany. Here we can only briefly indicate how Palmerstonian England conducted itself towards them.

The cause of Italy appealed to our ancestors as strongly

as the cause of Greece thirty years before. Italy had hitherto been divided into a number of small states, and Lombardy and Venice belonged to Austria. The foremost native power in Italy was Piedmont, with its popular king Victor Emanuel and its great statesman Cavour. Napoleon undertook to help the Piedmontese to drive the Austrians out of Italy, but after a few months' campaign in 1859 he found the task beyond him, and made peace, leaving Austria in possession of Venice. Cavour then decided to let loose the great popular leader Garibaldi upon the kingdom of Naples. From this point onwards British friendship proved of real value to the Italian cause. Palmerston's government held that the Italians should be left to themselves, and strongly discountenanced the sending of a French or Austrian fleet to protect the Neapolitan Bourbons from deposition.

Italy

A year after Garibaldi's triumph the Southern States of the American Union, being exasperated by the attitude of the Northern States towards the slavery that prevailed in the South, proclaimed their independence, and Abraham Lincoln, the Northerner who had just been elected President of the Union, set himself to reconquer the South. Nearly all our leading politicians, as also the "upper classes" to which they belonged, sympathised with the South. They considered that the South had as much right to independence against Lincoln as the ancestors of both North and South in their struggle with George III. Also, they preferred the courteous, old-fashioned country gentry of Virginia to the crude, hustling Yankees of New York. The British workmen, on the other hand, strongly sympathised with the North, as the foe of slavery, even though Northern naval power caused prolonged unemployment in Lancashire by cutting off the cotton exports of the Southern States.

The American Civil War

At one point we were very near war with Lincoln's government. Two Southern agents sailed for Europe on a British ship, and were stopped and arrested by a Northern cruiser. As a matter of international law the Northern

government was certainly in the wrong, and Lord Russell, Palmerston's Foreign Secretary, composed a despatch so peremptory in character that Lincoln might have been unable to resist the American demand for war with Britain. Happily the Prince Consort secured the alteration of Russell's despatch; it was the last act of an admirable man whom English people never appreciated because he was not an Englishman.

Schleswig-Holstein

While the American Civil War was still proceeding Bismarck became Minister-President of Prussia, and all the foreign offices of Europe found themselves struggling with the Schleswig-Holstein problem, which has the dismal reputation of being the most complicated problem in European history. Suffice it to say here that these Duchies had hitherto belonged to Denmark, that they were mainly inhabited by Germans, and that Bismarck was determined to get them for Prussia. Palmerston and Russell were eager to champion the rights (if they were rights) of Denmark, and there is no doubt that their rash words encouraged the Danes to fight for the Duchies. When it came to the point we could do nothing to help them, and appeared in the humiliating light of one who has barked but failed to bite.

Palmerston's last exploit was his feeblest; in fact, the age of Palmerston was over and the age of Bismarck had begun. Palmerstonian diplomacy counted for little against a Bismarck controlling a vast, scientifically organised military machine, and always ready to follow the word with the blow. Henceforth, for forty years, British influence would count for less and less in continental affairs, not because Britain had changed but because the Continent had changed under the leadership and example of Bismarckian Germany. Henceforth we interested ourselves in our Empire rather than in Europe, and prided ourselves on our "splendid isolation." When we returned, early in the twentieth century, to play a great part in continental politics, it was not as a Palmerstonian free-lance, but as the

close associate of one of the two great armed Alliances into which Europe was then divided.

The death of Palmerston (1865) is, it may be noted, as nearly as possible half-way between the two "Great Wars."

(iv) *Disraeli and Gladstone* (1865–1886)

Palmerston was dead, and who should succeed to his position? Power and popularity for the next fifteen years were to be divided into fairly equal shares between two men as unlike each other as they were both unlike Palmerston. Disraeli's career had hitherto been singularly unlucky. Though he was recognised by all as a brilliant debater and by a few as the most thoughtful of living statesmen, he had reached the age of sixty without ever enjoying real power. His most famous performance, the overthrow of Peel, had been the work of a mere private member without office. Since then he had twice held office in the Tory ministries of Lord Derby, but these ministries had been weak and brief. Gladstone, on the other hand, had a long official experience behind him, first under Sir Robert Peel, and then (when the Peelites joined the Liberals) as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the governments of Lord Palmerston. Gladstone was a disciple of Peel; he stood for strict financial economy. He had also shown himself like Palmerston a champion of the rights of small nations, but whereas Palmerston championed the rights of small nations against foreign Powers, Gladstone, in his later years, seemed almost more eager to champion the rights of small nations—Irish, Zulus, Afghans and Soudanese—against the power of his own country. Disraeli was no one's disciple: his ideas were his own. He foresaw, and on the whole welcomed, the coming of democracy, and he was eager to promote a closer union of the various parts of the British Empire. Finally, no two men could be less alike in personal character. Gladstone was deeply religious and an author of learned works on theology and Homer; Disraeli was a man

Disraeli and Gladstone

of the world, and a writer of novels. They disliked one another intensely. Party divisions soon came to assume a sharpness unknown since the days of Pitt and Fox.

Russell succeeded Palmerston as Prime Minister, with Gladstone as his "leader" in the House of Commons. Both Russell and Gladstone were in favour of a second Reform Bill, extending the parliamentary franchise. But Disraeli was also in favour of such a measure. In fact a situation arose curiously like, and yet unlike, the situation over the repeal of the Corn Laws twenty years before. On both occasions the leaders of both parties agreed that the great step had to be taken; in 1846 each party was reluctant to take it: in 1866 each party (or rather each group of leaders) wanted to take it and to secure the credit of taking it. In consequence there ensued two years of parliamentary manœuvring which makes a very pretty parliamentary comedy for those who like such things.

The Second Reform Bill

In 1866 Gladstone and Russell introduced their Bill: it was a very moderate measure. Disraeli secured its defeat in alliance with a group of Whigs who opposed any further steps in the direction of democracy. The Liberals then resigned and the Conservatives took office. Disraeli introduced another Reform Bill, just sufficiently different from the Liberal Bill to enable his party to escape the charge of gross inconsistency. Gladstone and the Liberals tried to defeat Disraeli's Bill by saying that it did not go far enough, but Disraeli avoided defeat by accepting their criticism and enlarging the scope of his Bill. Thus Disraeli's Bill (1867) became law. It established a fairly democratic franchise in the large towns which returned members of their own, but it left the wage-earner still voteless in the country districts and the smaller towns, which formed part of "county" constituencies. However, in the election that followed (1868) it was Gladstone,[1] not Disraeli, who won the final round of the tournament, securing a majority of a hundred, and thus becoming Prime Minister.

[1] Russell and Derby had now retired from the leadership of their respective parties.

With Gladstone's first government (1868–1874) we enter on a period of vigorous legislative reform in strong contrast with the Palmerstonian era. Some of these reforms belong to Irish history, and appear in a later chapter. In England, the Civil Services were thrown open to competitive examination, in place of the old system of nomination. The army was reorganised (a result of lessons learnt from the great victories of Prussia over Austria and France), and the extraordinary system by which commissions in the army used to be bought and sold was abolished. But the most important measure of these years was the Education Act of 1870. At this date England was far behind France, Germany, Scotland and America in popular education. Democratic control of government without democratic education is a dangerous experiment, and Lowe, one of the opponents of the Second Reform Bill, gave sound advice when he said, "We must educate our masters."

The Education Act of 1870

It is estimated that, at the time of Waterloo, only one quarter of the children of England and Wales attended any school at all, and only one-third of this quarter attended schools that could possibly be described as efficient. Most well-to-do people were entirely satisfied with this state of affairs. Education, they said, would only make the poor discontented and uppish; teach them to read, and they will read "seditious" literature. Such schools for the poor as existed were chiefly due to the enterprise of two men—Bell, a Churchman, and Lancaster, a Nonconformist. Lancaster's schools were first in the field, and Churchmen were stimulated to rivalry; for many, who would not have minded children growing up in ignorance, were horrified at the idea of their being captured by the Nonconformists. As time passed the Church schools, having more wealth behind them, greatly surpassed those of their rivals in numbers. In 1833, the year of Ashley's first Factory Act, Grey's government took the momentous step of voting an annual grant of £20,000 for the erection and maintenance of school buildings. In 1839 the grant was increased and

inspectors were appointed to supervise its expenditure. These are the beginnings of our vast system of state supported and state controlled education; but in 1870 only about half the children of the country received education, and much of that was poor in quality.

The Act of 1870 aimed not at creating a new system but at filling the gaps in the old one. The Church schools were preserved and given increased financial support, and new schools, controlled by the rate-payers of each locality, were established to fill gaps where no Church schools existed. These new schools gave "Bible teaching" which satisfied the Nonconformists, but not "Church teaching." The blending of old and new has introduced many curious complications, and has involved unfortunate quarrels between Church and non-Church parties in the educational world. It is interesting to note that the minister chiefly responsible for the Act was W. E. Forster, the son-in-law of Dr. Arnold, the great Rugby head-master who first clearly established the ideals which we associate with our so-called "public schools" to-day.

In 1880 attendance at an elementary school was made compulsory, and in 1891 the small fees that were still charged in many of the schools were abolished. In 1902 Mr. Balfour's government established the municipal secondary school system as we have it to-day, and, by providing "free places" in these schools for children from the elementary schools, set up a broad educational ladder for the clever and industrious sons of the poor.

The Franco-Prussian War

The year of Gladstone's Education Act is also the year of Prussia's sensational victory over France, which led to the abdication of Napoleon, the establishment of the "Third Republic" in France, the transference of Alsace and Lorraine from France to Germany, and the establishment of the German Empire under Prussian control. Gladstone secured from both belligerents an undertaking to respect the neutrality of Belgium, but otherwise he failed to exercise any influence on the course of events. For this he has been much blamed

by some Conservative writers, but it may be doubted if a Conservative government—or a Palmerston government—would have been any more successful than Gladstone.

The "Alabama" arbitration

For some years past we had been involved in a most unfortunate controversy with the United States. During the American Civil War some Southerners had succeeded, owing to our negligence, in purchasing and equipping in English waters a privateer, the *Alabama*, which did much damage to the commerce of the Northern States. The American government demanded redress, which Russell, when Palmerston's Foreign Secretary, had refused, and the dispute dragged on through various phases, and was a source of much ill-feeling, the Americans resenting our refusal to pay, and we resenting the extravagant total of the American demands. Gladstone got the Americans to consent to refer the assessment of damages to an international tribunal at Geneva, and when the tribunal made its award, promptly paid the bill, which amounted to £3,000,000. This was not only an important step towards Anglo-American friendship, but also an important step towards establishing a system of international arbitration.

The fall of the Liberals

Governments that make many changes generally also make many enemies, and such was the fate of Gladstone's government. Their Irish measures had offended the Church of England, their Education Act, by endowing the Church schools, had annoyed the Nonconformists, Army reform had annoyed the gentry, an unwise clause in a Trade Union Act (see p. 530) had annoyed trade unionists, and an attempt to reduce the number of public-houses had offended both the powerful class which sells and the numerous class which drinks intoxicating liquors in such places. Disraeli described the government as "plundering and blundering," and compared the ministers sitting in a row in the House of Commons to "a range of exhausted volcanoes." And so, in the election of 1874, the Liberals were defeated and Disraeli became Prime Minister (1874–1880). This was the first strong and durable Conservative government since the overthrow of Peel nearly

thirty years before. Of the next thirty years, twenty-two are covered by Conservative governments.

Disraeli's government opened up a new line in legislation by a Housing Act which empowered local authorities to remove slums by compulsory purchase and build sound working-class houses in their place. There was also an important Act extending the powers of trade unions (see p. 530). But the main energies of the government were absorbed by foreign and imperial affairs.

Disraeli's Government

From 1875 to 1878, Disraeli (or Lord Beaconsfield as he now became) was involved in a complicated quarrel with Russia in defence of that troublesome "sick man," the Turkish Empire. One is reminded at once of the Crimean War of twenty years before, and indeed a second war between Russia and Great Britain was narrowly avoided. But there is a striking difference between the circumstances of the two quarrels. At the time of the Crimean War we hear rather vaguely of "Christian populations under Turkish rule," who seem to have no will or power of their own. In the crisis of the 'seventies these vague "Christians" have become "Serbians and Bulgarians" and are leading actors in the piece. In fact, the "nationalist movement" which had created Greece and united Italy and Germany had now inflamed the peoples of the Balkans. In our own day it has gone much further afield; it has recreated Poland, and half-a-dozen other new States in Europe, and stirred to activity the Oriental peoples of Egypt, India and China. Beaconsfield cared nothing for nationalist movements, perhaps because he was proud to belong to the most international of all races, the Jews; Gladstone, on the other hand, was thrilled by the aspirations and horrified by the sufferings of the Bulgarians. Beaconsfield regarded the Turkish Empire as a bulwark of British power in India against the ever-growing menace of Russia; Gladstone wanted to see the Turks cleared "bag and baggage out of the province they have desolated and profaned." Thus the Eastern Question embittered the animosity of the two great rivals.

The Russo-Turkish War

In 1875 the Serbs of Bosnia, then a Turkish province, and the Bulgarians rose in rebellion against Turkish rule, and the little kingdom of Serbia came to their assistance. They were defeated, but after prolonged and futile negotiations among the Great Powers, Russia declared war on Turkey (1877), and, after a stubbornly contested campaign, advanced to the defences of Constantinople. Thereupon the British fleet was sent through the Dardanelles, and we were within an ace of war. Happily Russia made peace with Turkey. The British government demanded that the treaty between Russia and Turkey should be submitted to a Congress of the Great Powers. Bismarck, the strongest man in Europe, supported the British demand; Russia consented; and Beaconsfield, with his Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury, represented Great Britain at the Congress of Berlin, at which a small (unduly small) Bulgarian state was granted virtual independence and Bosnia was transferred, not to Serbia, but to Austria. Once again, as in Palmerstonian days, Britain had played a great part in continental affairs, but whether it was a wise part is a question on which opinions differed at the time and still differ to-day.

The Congress of Berlin

Beaconsfield's critics said that he backed Turkey because he was himself of Oriental race, but he maintained that he was acting throughout in defence of the British Empire, that his policy was not so much continental as imperialistic. "Imperialism" in British politics is a difficult term to define, but we may say that it implies a determination to maintain at all costs and, when suitable occasion offers, to extend the territory under the British flag, and also to link the various parts of the Empire more closely together. In this sense Gladstone was an anti-imperialist. He did not wish to abandon the Empire, but he was opposed to its extension, and distrusted the motives of those who wished to maintain British authority against "peoples rightly struggling to be free." Beaconsfield, on the other hand, was the most thorough-going imperialist since Chatham. In fact his ministry marks the beginning

Imperialism

of the modern imperialist movement, which fills the last quarter of the nineteenth century; which found its laureate in Kipling, its symbol in the pageantry of Queen Victoria's two Jubilee processions (1887 and 1897), and its climax in the South African War of 1899–1902.

The Empire had been steadily growing in wealth and population since Waterloo, and steamships and telegraphs had been linking its parts together in closer union, but hitherto people at home had not taken much interest in the matter. It was generally assumed that Canada and Australia would ultimately, like the United States, become independent. The long European peace that followed Waterloo had encouraged the idea that the development of industry, coupled with free trade and increasingly democratic institutions, would abolish war: and a generation which looked forward to the disappearance of war would not be likely to attach much value to imperial power. But the triumph of military power in the creation of the new German Empire dispelled these agreeable dreams; and British imperialism was, in part at least, a response to the very different imperialism of modern Germany. Beaconsfield saw the imperialist movement coming, and skilfully linked it with the policy of the Tory party.

The Suez Canal

His first and most popular imperial venture was the purchase, in 1875, of £4,000,000 of shares in the Suez Canal, which gave us the control of the shortest route to India. Napoleon had long ago projected such a canal, and a French company had recently made it, but the Khedive of Egypt, Mehemet Ali's successor, held the majority of the shares. The Khedive now wanted to sell, and Beaconsfield succeeded in forestalling the French, who would otherwise have secured the shares.

Beaconsfield and Queen Victoria

In the next year Beaconsfield arranged that the Prince of Wales should pay the first visit of British royalty to India, and carried through parliament a Bill conferring the title of Empress of India on the Queen. The title gave great satisfaction to Victoria herself, and marks an important stage in her long

reign. We are apt to imagine, perhaps, that Queen Victoria was always the idol of her subjects; but it was not so. During the first part of her reign she was associated in the popular mind with her husband, Prince Albert, and the Prince, though he worked himself to death in devoted labours for the country of his adoption, remained a foreigner and an object of distrust. After the Prince's death in 1861, Victoria entirely withdrew for many years from public life, and it seemed to many that the nation got no return for the tax-payer's money expended on the maintenance of a "royal family." It was Beaconsfield, every inch a courtier, who encouraged the Queen to play the great part in public life which we associate with the royal family to-day. He completed the royal education which Melbourne had begun forty years before.

The two years following the Congress of Berlin (1878–1880) were filled with imperial ventures in various quarters of the world. In Egypt the bankruptcy of the Khedive led Britain and France to establish a "Dual Control" over Egyptian finance, which was to lead in a very few years to the establishment of British authority in Egypt. In South Africa the Transvaal was annexed and the Zulus conquered in a little war which opened with a tragic defeat at Isandlwhana. In India the British government was involved in a quarrel with Afghanistan, which seemed to be passing under Russian influence, and Afghanistan was twice invaded by British forces. These imperial ventures roused Gladstone to fury, and he determined to devote all his energies to the destruction of "Beaconsfieldism," the new gospel of political immorality which championed the Turk, made light of his massacres of Bulgarians, destroyed the independence of the Transvaal Dutch, enslaved the Zulus, and carried fire and sword into the highlands of Afghanistan. In the winter of 1879 he carried out a prolonged oratorical campaign in his constituency of Midlothian, which marks the beginning of a new development in British politics. Hitherto political leaders had in the main restricted their energies to parliament.

Imperial ventures

The "platform oration," though not unknown, had been occasional and comparatively unimportant. Henceforth great statesmen would more and more address themselves to the great public, over the head, so to speak, of parliament. It was a sign of the coming of democracy.

The General Election of 1880 gave a verdict in favour of the Midlothian campaigner. Beaconsfield's imperialism had of late been somewhat reckless: it had overshot the mark, and an incident like Isandlwhana was not easily forgotten. Beaconsfield himself died a year later. One wonders whether he foresaw that Gladstone's policy of anti-imperialism and retreat would do more to popularise imperialism than all his own imperialistic schemes had achieved.

Gladstone's second government

The Gladstone government of 1880–1885 has always been reckoned one of the most unfortunate governments in our history. The Prime Minister was growing old—he was seventy when he took office; and his party was divided. There were old-fashioned Whigs who followed Lord Hartington, afterwards Duke of Devonshire, and eager democratic Radicals who followed Joseph Chamberlain, the Birmingham manufacturer who had recently entered politics, and stood for a programme of social, almost "socialistic," reforms in which Gladstone took no interest. Moreover the "Irish problem" suddenly strode into the foreground of British politics. The Reform Bill of 1867 had given the vote to a large body of Irish Catholics, and the result was now apparent in a compact Irish Nationalist party, under the leadership of Parnell, determined, so far as lay in its power, to make British political life intolerable until "Home Rule" had been granted to Ireland, and at present both British parties were determined not to grant Home Rule. Amidst all this disunion and confusion Gladstone's government had to handle the infinitely difficult and delicate tasks involved in undoing the results of Beaconsfield's imperialism. In India the task of "extrication," as we may call it, was successfully achieved. Afghanistan was abandoned, and a firm friendship established with the new Amir of that

country. In South Africa independence was restored to the Transvaal, but not without an unnecessary little war and a humiliating defeat at Majuba. In Egypt the Gladstone government went forward rather than backward, and British control was established as a temporary measure; but hesitation and divided counsels as to what was to be done with the Soudan led to the tragic death of General Gordon at Khartoum.

The Third Reform Bill

In the sphere of domestic legislation Chamberlain carried the first Employers' Liability Act, making employers responsible, within certain restrictions, for accidents to their work-people. This is important as the beginning of a vast and complicated modern system of industrial insurance. Another Act marks a stage in another equally important line of development: the Married Women's Property Act gave a wife the same rights of acquiring, holding or bequeathing property as belonged to a widow or a spinster; she was no longer to be at the financial mercy of her husband. In 1885 the Third Reform Bill extended to county constituencies the franchise that the Second Reform Bill had given to boroughs; that is to say, it extended the vote to practically all male wage-earners, except young unmarried sons living at home. After the Second Reform Bill the third was inevitable. Historically its chief interest lies in the fact that it abolished a distinction between two types of constituency that was as old as parliament itself. When Edward I summoned his famous "Model Parliament," he summoned two knights from each shire and two burgesses from each borough. He was not concerned with "the representation of the People" —such a phrase would have meant nothing to him. He sought to obtain opinions and grants of money from two distinct classes of his subjects.[1] The distinction between knights and burgesses had long lost its original meaning, but English conservatism had preserved, in the first two Reform Bills, the old tradition of two franchises: it was now at length swept away by the rising tide of democracy.

[1] See Vol. I. p. 77.

The first Home Rule Bill

Gladstone's government was defeated in the summer of 1885, and the Conservatives, under Lord Salisbury, took office as "Caretakers" until the end of the year, when the registers of the new voters would be completed. In the election which then followed the Liberals retained a majority of 82 over the Conservatives, but the Irish Nationalists secured 86 seats, winning every seat outside Ulster and the Protestant University of Dublin, many of them by quite overwhelming majorities. Gladstone's mind had long been moving towards Home Rule as the only solution of the Irish problem, and these Irish elections decided him. Thus the Irish party swung over to the Liberal side, Lord Salisbury resigned, and Gladstone took office at the head of a Home Rule coalition and set about preparing a Home Rule Bill, to establish an Irish parliament, with limited powers, in Dublin. But several of his old colleagues had refused to join his Cabinet. How many of the rank and file of Liberals would desert him? Would there be enough "Liberal Unionists" to secure, in alliance with the Conservatives, the defeat of Home Rule? Hartington and Chamberlain had both deserted Gladstone, and the ominous threat "Ulster will fight" reminded many that Home Rule might raise as many difficulties as it solved. Gladstone's Bill was defeated by thirty votes. He dissolved parliament, and Great Britain (*i.e.* excluding Ireland) returned a Unionist majority of 178. The Irish vote remained unchanged.

1846 and 1886 may be compared as the two great "splits" in our modern party politics. In 1846 the rebellion against Peel and repeal of the Corn Law split the Conservatives, and the party did not secure a majority for the next twenty-eight years; in 1886 the rebellion against Gladstone and Home Rule split the Liberals, and they in turn did not secure a majority for twenty years.[1] In 1846 the leader,

[1] It is true that there were some brief and weak Conservative governments during the first period, and a brief and weak Liberal government (1892–1895) during the latter period, but these governments, like the Labour government of 1924, only existed "on

Peel, was himself, with his "Peelites," thrown out of the party, and the rebels took over control; in 1886 the leader, Gladstone, retained his leadership and the party name, and the rebels contributed their name "Unionist" to the Conservative party, which they ultimately joined.

(v) *Chamberlain and Lloyd George* (1886–1914)

The twenty-eight years that lie between the defeat of Gladstone and the Great War fall into two contrasted periods of fairly equal length. The first sixteen years (1886–1902), ending with the conclusion of the South African War, were a time of Tory government and imperialism, the last phase of the Victorian age, the "Jubilee period"; the tales and verses of Mr. Rudyard Kipling are their characteristic expression in literature. After 1902 the Tory government encountered a series of mishaps, leading up to the unprecedented Liberal triumph of 1906, in an election which also established the existence of the Labour Party as a force to be reckoned with. Thenceforth Liberalism was in power down to 1914, and the characteristic figures in literature were men whose books were full of revolutionary notions on every kind of social question—Mr. Bernard Shaw and Mr. H. G. Wells. Joseph Chamberlain and Mr. Lloyd George, whose names appear at the head of this section, were neither of them Prime Ministers, but their names symbolise better than those of the Prime Ministers of the period the two forces, Imperialism and Radicalism, which successively prevailed. In many respects Chamberlain was the political heir of Beaconsfield and Mr. Lloyd George the political heir of Gladstone.

Two periods

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sufferance"; *i.e.* they were kept in power by independent "allies"—the Liberal government of 1892 by the Irish, the Labour government by the Liberals, and the Conservative governments of the 'fifties and 'sixties by the Peelites.

Home Rule being defeated, Lord Salisbury resumed office as Prime Minister (1886–1892). Unlike both Disraeli and Gladstone, his chief characteristic was caution and massive common-sense; his interests lay chiefly in foreign policy, and he realised how much foreign policy had suffered, in the Gladstone–Disraeli period, from being made the battle-ground of party politics. He set himself to establish a national foreign policy which should be above and outside party controversy, and his success was complete. When his government went out of office in 1892 the Liberal Foreign Secretary, Lord Rosebery, proved himself a disciple of Salisbury rather than of Gladstone. In the same way, after 1900, when the growing menace from Germany made foreign policy more important than ever before, the policy of an *entente* with France, begun by the Conservative Balfour government, was carried on without any break of continuity by Sir Edward Grey, the foreign minister in the Liberal government, which, on most domestic and imperial questions, held opinions widely different from those of the Conservatives.

The Salisbury government of 1886–1892

The most important achievement of Salisbury's foreign policy in these years was the "Partition of Africa." Explorers of the 'sixties and 'seventies had opened up the "Dark Continent" to the trader and colonist much as the explorers of an earlier date had opened up America and the sea route to India. When one remembers how much blood was shed during earlier centuries for the spoils of America and India, the peaceful partitioning of Central Africa is realised as a great achievement.

During these years the "Two-power standard" was first explicitly adopted, *i.e.* the principle that the British Navy should be maintained at least as strong as the two next strongest navies combined. The two rival naval Powers of those days were France and Russia; France was irritated because she had backed out of Egypt whereas we had established our authority there, and Russia was still a possible menace to India. Germany had as yet no great navy.

In 1892 the Liberals regained enough seats to give them a majority of forty with Irish support, and Gladstone, now a veteran of eighty-two, took office and introduced a second Home Rule Bill. It passed the Commons but was rejected by the Lords, who also rejected many more Liberal Bills on the pretext that they had not got a genuinely "British" majority behind them. It might be foreseen that, if at some later date a strong Liberal government secured power, there would be a formidable conflict between the two Houses; but Gladstone's government was too weak to undertake such a task. Gladstone resigned in 1894, and the Lord Rosebery succeeded him. The only important achievement of this Liberal government was Harcourt's 1894 Budget, which revised and increased the useful and unpopular group of taxes called "Death Duties."

The last Gladstone government

In 1895 Salisbury returned to office with a much stronger government than before, as the Liberal Unionist leaders, Chamberlain and Devonshire, now consented to serve under him. Chamberlain took the Colonial Office, and quickly proved that the mantle of Beaconsfield had descended upon him. Eleven years before, in Gladstone's Cabinet, Chamberlain had reluctantly accepted the measures which led to the death of Gordon and the abandonment of the Soudan. Now, as a colleague of Salisbury, he eagerly supported the reversal of Gladstone's policy. In 1898 a British and Egyptian army advanced up the Nile under Sir Herbert Kitchener, and established British authority in the Soudan. A week after Kitchener's arrival in Khartoum, it was announced that a small French force, under an explorer named Marchand, had occupied Fashoda, five hundred miles further up the Nile. Kitchener went straight to Fashoda, and hoisted the British flag, after a friendly interview with Marchand. The French government, however, was far from friendly, and for some weeks rumours of war were in the air.

Kitchener at Khartoum

Meanwhile the South African War was approaching.

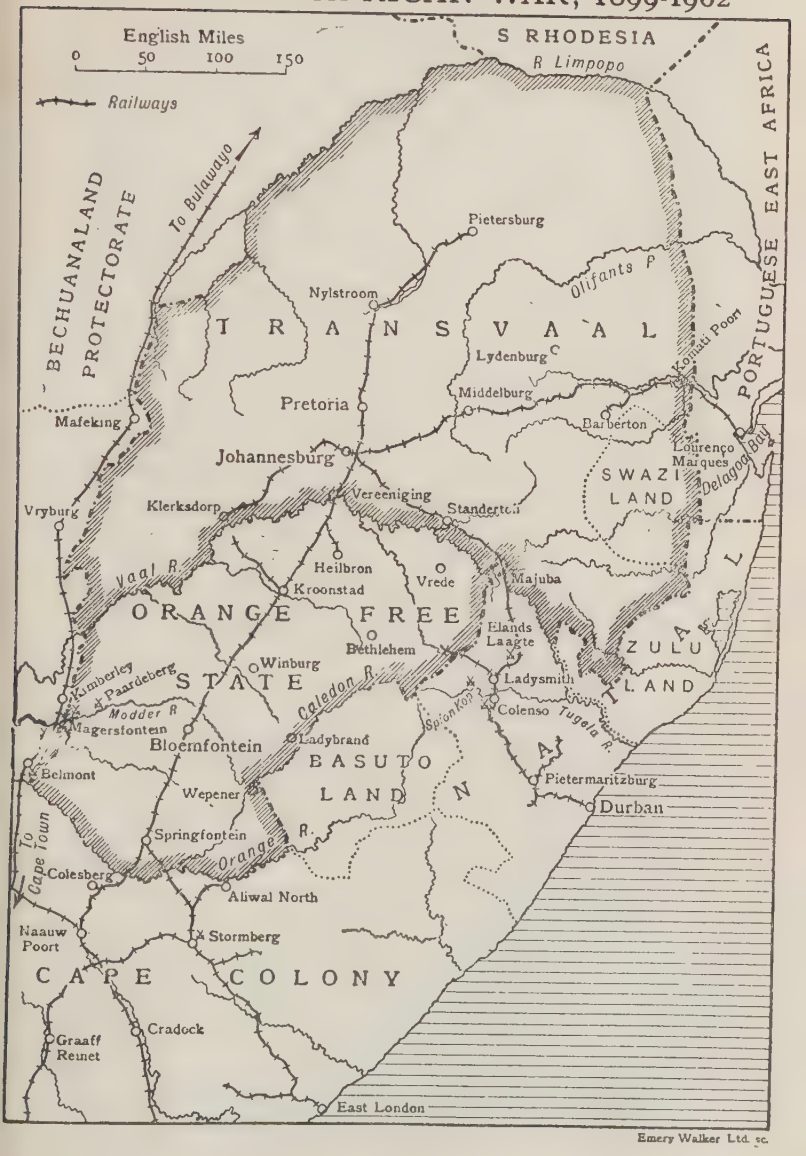
Since the days of Majuba, when the Transvaal regained its independence, a great goldfield had been discovered and a great gold-mining industry developed around Johannesburg, only thirty miles from Pretoria, the capital of the Dutch Republic. It was in a way an unkind fate for the Boers (as the South African Dutch were called), since they had migrated from the Cape to the interior only sixty years before, on purpose to escape from the modern civilisation they so much disliked, and they subjected the "Uitlanders," *i.e.* the immigrant mining population, to very unreasonable conditions, denying them any share in the government and hampering their industry by petty and spiteful regulations. In January 1896 the Uitlanders attempted an insurrection in collaboration with the troops of the British Chartered Company recently established in Rhodesia. This Jameson Raid, as it was called from the name of the Rhodesian commander, was a complete failure. The British government was entirely innocent of any participation in the Raid, but the incident sharpened antagonism between the Boer Republic and the British Empire, and Kruger, the Boer President, prepared for war. In March 1899 the Uitlanders, who were mostly British subjects, addressed a petition to Queen Victoria, reciting their grievances, and Lord Salisbury's government took up their cause. Kruger obstinately refused to make concessions, and war followed.

The Transvaal

The South African War seems a small thing to us to-day, but it did not seem so at the end of the Victorian age, and in certain respects it was an unprecedented undertaking. Never before in the history of the world had a quarter of a million troops been transported over so many thousands of miles of ocean. The war falls naturally into three periods. For five months (October 1899–February 1900) the British Empire was doggedly, and by no means always successfully, defending its own territories against Boer invasion. British forces were besieged in Ladysmith, in Kimberley and in Mafeking. Buller, advancing to the relief of Ladysmith, was defeated at

The South African War

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR, 1899-1902



Emery Walker Ltd. sc.

Colenso and at Spion Kop; Methuen, advancing to the relief of Kimberley, was defeated at Magersfontein; and Gatacre, commanding against the Boers who invaded Cape Colony, was defeated at Stormberg. Three of these defeats fell within one December week, and Christmas 1899 was a season of mourning and depression throughout Great Britain. The long happy security of the Victorian age seemed to be a thing of the past; and so in truth it was, though for wider reasons than any arising out of South Africa. Germany was watching the South African contest, and was beginning to set about building a fleet which should challenge the naval supremacy on which not only our empire but our very food supply depended.

At the end of February 1900 Ladysmith and Kimberley were relieved, and the main army of invasion commanded by Roberts and Kitchener won a great victory at Paardeberg. The next four months (March–June) saw the apparent conquest of the enemy territory. Pretoria was occupied; Kruger fled to Europe; Lord Roberts laid down his command. It seemed that the war was over. But the Boers, like the Spaniards of Napoleon's day, were determined not to be beaten, and for nearly two years more (July 1900 to May 1902) small mounted forces of Boers under a variety of commanders, De Wet, Botha, Smuts and others, played an endless and exasperating game of hide and seek with the British armies. Had aeroplanes been invented, this stage of the war would have been cut down to very brief dimensions.

At last the untiring persistence of Lord Kitchener was rewarded, and the Boers laid down their arms. Some think the war ought never to have been fought. They point out that Kruger was very old, and that after his death the gold-miners would probably have had no difficulty in securing fair conditions. However that may be, the errors, if any, in making the war were redeemed by a wise and generous peace. The Boer Republics [1] were annexed, but

[1] The Orange Free State had joined the Transvaal when war was declared, though it had no concern with the original quarrel.

Dutch as well as English was to be taught in schools and used in law-courts, and the British government made a gift of three million pounds to assist in re-establishing the Boers in their farms. Self-government was to follow as soon as possible, and was, in fact, granted by the Liberal government of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in 1906.

While the war was still raging the century had ended, and the end of the Great Queen's reign had followed within a month. The most characteristic and conspicuous figures of the Victorian age, Tennyson and Gladstone for example, had already passed away. A new age was opening. Chamberlain and the imperialistic sentiment he personified had reached their climax in the South African War. Its disastrous opening and its wearisome conclusion seem to have set the national mind moving in other directions. In 1903 Chamberlain left the Conservative government (in which Mr. Balfour had succeeded his uncle, Lord Salisbury, as Prime Minister), and launched a great campaign for Tariff Reform. Chamberlain's object was to encourage trade within the Empire by a system of taxes on imports from non-Empire countries. This meant the abandonment of the Victorian system of free trade, and Chamberlain's policy gradually developed into a policy of protecting British industries against foreign competition. The difficulty of the purely imperial side of Chamberlain's policy was that far the most important products of the Empire were food. Would not taxes on foreign-grown food, Imperial Preference as it was called, mean a rise in the cost of food of the British working man? Whatever the merits of Chamberlain's scheme it entirely failed to attract the British voter.

A new age begins

In 1904 came another imperial problem which turned the tide still more strongly against imperialism and the Conservative party. On the demand of the gold-miners the Council which was then governing the Transvaal undertook to import Chinese labour to work in the mines, under a system of rigid control. The Chinese were not allowed to mix with the rest of the population, nor to move outside the ground allotted to them except

"Chinese Labour"

with a permit valid for forty-eight hours. At once an outcry arose: had we, it was asked, conquered the Transvaal in order to introduce "Chinese slavery" into the country? At the General Election which followed, in January 1906, the most effective Liberal poster was a hideous yellow Chinese face. Whether this poster won votes for Liberalism because the voter hated Chinamen, or because he hated the enslavement of Chinamen, is more difficult to determine.

While the Conservative party, divided in opinion over Chamberlain's tariff policy, was declining in popularity, the Liberal party, which had itself been divided on the merits of the South African War, was reunited and invigorated. Mr. Lloyd George had made his reputation by the courage with which he assumed the Gladstonian mantle and championed the cause of the "small nations" in South Africa against "imperial tyranny." At the time his activities had made him intensely unpopular; but when real pluck has been shown, even in an unpopular cause, the British public have a wholesome way of forgetting, or forgiving, the cause and remembering the pluck. After the war he had become the champion of the Nonconformists, who regarded themselves as unfairly treated by some of the clauses of Mr. Balfour's Education Act of 1902. At the same time Mr. Asquith, who had supported the South African War, found an opening perfectly suited to his abilities as the champion of orthodox free trade against the Chamberlain policy.

Liberal revival

Thus the election of 1906 produced a wholesale transference of seats such as had never been witnessed before in our parliamentary history. Only 157 Conservatives remained, and over against them were 397 Liberals, 83 Irish Nationalists, and 51 Labour members.[1] Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman took office as head of the Liberal government, and his Cabinet contained perhaps more men of first-class ability than any other British Cabinet. Among these was Mr. Asquith, who

The Liberal government of 1906

[1] The events which brought success to the Labour party are reviewed in the next chapter.

became Prime Minister in 1908; Mr. Lloyd George, who succeeded Mr. Asquith on that occasion as Chancellor of the Exchequer; Sir Edward Grey, who directed our foreign policy through the critical and tragic years that were to follow, down to more than half-way through the Great War; Mr. Haldane, who carried through the army reforms which provided, at one end of the scale, the Expeditionary Force that fought at Mons and the Marne, and, at the other end of the scale, our Territorial and O.T.C. organisation; and Mr. Churchill, who was in charge of the Admiralty in the years immediately preceding the war.

Yet the first years of this government, so strong in the quality of its leaders and the quantity and enthusiasm of its supporters, were not wholly successful. Some achievements of note there undoubtedly were. We have already mentioned the grant of self-government to the newly-conquered colonies in South Africa, a bold measure which more than anything else converted the ex-guerilla leaders, Botha and Smuts, into staunch upholders of the Empire. We have also mentioned the army reforms. Mr. Asquith, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, made an important innovation in income-tax assessment by laying a heavier tax on "unearned" than on "earned" incomes. The justification of this distinction is not to be found in the superior morality of the "earners," but in the plain fact that an "unearned" income is really worth more to the receiver than an "earned" income of the same amount. For the "unearned" income, being the product of investment, will continue indefinitely, whereas the "earned" income terminates when the earner dies or becomes too old to work, so that part of it has to be set aside as savings. Another popular Liberal measure was the establishment (1908) of Old Age Pensions. Chamberlain had advocated it long before, but his Conservative colleagues would not allow him to carry it through. Few reforms of modern times have given so much happiness and done so little harm.

So much for early Liberal successes; but there were also failures. One of the most important questions of the

moment was the legal position of trade unions, as will be shown in the next chapter. Here it must suffice to say that the Liberals, after introducing a Bill of their own, practically abandoned it in favour of a rival measure introduced by the Labour Party; whatever the merits of the Labour Bill (a subject still disputed), the Liberal leaders showed a singular readiness to abandon their own policy. The House of Lords accepted the Liberal–Labour Trade Disputes Bill, but it rejected a Liberal Education Bill and a Liberal Licensing Bill, both important measures on which much time had been spent. Liberalism would clearly get no further till it had fought and beaten the House of Lords.

The pitched battle between the Houses was not long in coming. Increased revenue was needed to finance both Old Age Pensions and the rapid development of the navy, in face of the German menace. Increased taxation can hardly ever, in the nature of things, be popular even with those who admit its necessity. The singular skill of Mr. Lloyd George, however, succeeded in presenting the new taxes embodied in his Budget of 1909 as though they constituted a great programme of social reform. The taxes in themselves do not to-day appear very remarkable. They included a small super-tax on the definitely rich; an increase of taxes on alcohol and public-houses; the beginnings of taxes on motors and petrol; and certain small, complicated, and ultimately unsuccessful taxes on land. What was remarkable was not the Budget but the oratory with which it was advertised as a mighty blow to the rich and a godsend to the poor. The rich accepted this singular estimate, and the House of Lords rejected the Budget.

The Lloyd George Budget

It was a bad mistake in tactics from the Conservative point of view, for it was an old and well-established custom that the House of Lords does not interfere with a Budget, because, whereas ordinary legislation can without inconvenience be postponed, the Budget, or Finance Bill, legalises annual taxation without which the whole machinery of government is thrown out of

The Parliament Act

gear. Mr. Asquith at once dissolved parliament, and the election, though it reduced the Liberal party to a position of almost exact equality with the Conservatives, gave the government a majority of about 120, since they were supported by the Labour party and the Irish Nationalists as well as by the Liberals. When the new parliament met, not only was the Budget re-introduced and carried through both Houses, but the government also introduced a Parliament Bill, which curtailed the powers of the House of Lords. Henceforth "money bills," certified as such by the Speaker, could not be touched by the House of Lords, and all other Bills were to become law, in spite of the House of Lords, if they had been passed by the House of Commons in three consecutive sessions. At the same time the duration of parliaments was reduced from seven to five years. After much heated discussion, another General Election which merely repeated the result of its predecessor, and an undertaking that, if necessary, new peers would be created in sufficient numbers to carry the measure, the House of Lords gave way and the Parliament Bill became law.

The same year, 1911, witnessed two other measures perhaps equally important. One was the Insurance Act, which established our vast system of compulsory insurance of wage-earners against sickness and unemployment. In this matter we were following a lead which Germany had given twenty years before. The principle of the system is that part, but only part, of the benefits of the insurance are paid for by the worker insured, the rest coming partly from the employer and partly from the State, *i.e.* the general taxpayer. Thus the worker, in Mr. Lloyd George's phrase, obtained "ninepence for fourpence."

The Insurance Act

The other measure was the institution of salaries (£400 a year) for members of the House of Commons. The immediate cause of this measure was a legal judgment to the effect that trade unions were not entitled to use their funds for paying salaries to Labour members of Parliament. But the measure was

Payment of members

justified on broader grounds. Under modern conditions conscientious membership of the House of Commons involves hard work which deserves to be paid for, and if members are not paid, poor men are virtually excluded or at least seriously handicapped. Before the days of democracy this seemed reasonable enough; but now that the wage-earner had been given the vote he should clearly be free to send his fellow wage-earner into parliament if he wished, without any financial handicap.

Home Rule again

But meanwhile attention was turning once again to the problem of Irish Home Rule. It had been practically excluded from the Liberal programme of 1906, but the election of 1910 brought it again into the foreground, and the Parliament Act removed the hitherto insurmountable barrier of the House of Lords. The years 1912–1914 gave a full-length exhibition of legislative procedure under the Parliament Act. Three Bills were introduced in 1912, a Bill removing the right of voters owning property in several constituencies to use more than one of their votes, a Bill to disestablish the Welsh dioceses of the Church of England, and a Home Rule Bill. They were all rejected by the House of Lords, re-introduced and rejected in 1913, re-introduced in 1914 and . . . . . Another and greater series of events suddenly interposed and cut short the domestic drama in its fifth act. Suffice it to say that the Plural Voting Bill and the Welsh Bill became law, whereas the Home Rule Bill, though formally accepted by Parliament, was never enacted in Ireland. We shall return to it in the Irish chapter.

Foreign policy

British history from 1904 to 1914 presents, as it were, two stories which run side by side without apparently having anything to do with one another. One story is concerned with the domestic controversies we have already related. The other story is the story of foreign policy, the story that leads up to the Great War. Most people were so absorbed in the first story that they paid little or no attention to the second; others never allowed their thoughts to wander far from the second

story, and thought about Germany in the intervals of making speeches about the House of Lords or Ireland. The first story grew more and more exciting, and one could not see how it would end. And it never ended; for the Great War cut it short, and when the Irish controversy was resumed, it was resumed under different conditions.

The final Book of this History is devoted to the Great War, and in that Book the causes of the war will be examined. Here we can give only an outline of the measures taken by our own country in face of the growing menace from Germany.

After the Treaty of Berlin of 1878 and throughout the imperialist period, Great Britain had prided itself on its "splendid isolation" from European affairs. The other four continents, we felt, were enough for us. Such controversies as we had with European Powers arose out of imperial questions, and involved France or Russia much more often than Germany. The South African War revealed the fact that practically every country in Europe regarded us with envy and dislike, and Chamberlain advocated an alliance, or at least a "friendly understanding" with Germany; but nothing came of it. Germany had already begun to build her fleet, and the Kaiser's restless mind was already occupied with vague schemes that were to assure Germany both the leadership of Europe and a great empire beyond the seas, such as could only be created at the expense of the British Empire.

The "Entente Cordiale"

After the South African War Mr. Balfour's government set itself to make a treaty with France which would provide an amicable settlement to the many controversies in which France and Britain had long figured as rivals. The famous treaty of 1904 settled Anglo-French controversies relating to Egypt, Morocco, Siam, Gambia, Nigeria, Zanzibar, Madagascar and the New Hebrides. It was in no sense a treaty of alliance. It may be doubted whether its authors even intended it to be a "friendly understanding" or *entente* with a view to possible joint action against Germany. It was the Kaiser who made

it an *entente* by a public threat, in the next year, to French interests in Morocco. War between France and Germany at once became a possibility, and the British government made it plain that, if the worst came to the worst, it would support France in arms. In seeking to break an *entente* which as yet hardly existed, the Kaiser had, in fact, made it.

The Liberal government now took office, but this made no difference to foreign policy except that the Germans, misled by abuse of the Liberal government in English Conservative newspapers, underrated British efficiency, and inclined to think that Britain would never fight. Mr. Haldane carried through his army reforms. The first *Dreadnought* was launched, and the government, though more than once proposing to Germany an agreed "holiday" from naval competition, maintained, when these offers were rejected, a 16 : 10 standard; that is to say, they responded to the German naval ship-building programme by building five ships for every three ships of the same type built by Germany.

In 1907 Great Britain made a treaty with Russia similar to the 1904 treaty with France. It settled controversies relating to Persia and the Afghan frontier. France and Russia were already close allies, and five years before Britain had made a treaty with Japan. The Japanese treaty was an "alliance," in that each Power bound itself to support the other if attacked by more than one European Power. Our treaties with France and Russia were not alliances, and though the military and naval staffs of Britain and France were permitted to make arrangements for common action in case of war, it was clearly understood that these arrangements between the fighting departments in no way fettered the freedom of policy enjoyed by the two governments. Some critics have said that we ought to have made definite alliances with France and Russia. Such critics write after the event, and assume that the war was inevitable. But no war is inevitable until it has actually begun, and such alliances might have increased the likelihood of war by encouraging the

"Entente" or alliance?

aggressive elements in France and Russia. Moreover, the British electorate would certainly not have consented thus to forfeit in advance its freedom of action. Even in August 1914 the nation was acutely divided until Germany violated the neutrality of Belgium. We declared war not so much to defend France or to defend ourselves as to maintain, in accordance with our ancient promise (see page 486), the independence of Belgium. It was only later that the wider and deeper arguments in favour of our war policy were realised by the mass of the people.

The final stages

The Morocco crisis of 1905 was followed by a Balkan crisis of 1908, and another Morocco crisis of 1911. Each of these crises was surmounted, but each brought Europe to the very verge of war. The attitude of the British government was reflected in the inexhaustible patience and forbearance of the diplomacy of Sir Edward Grey. At the same time it was necessary to prepare for the worst, while hoping to escape it. A "War Book," as it was called, was compiled. "Into the War Book, which was started in 1910, was incorporated all the predetermined action, decided upon as the result of innumerable inquiries, in the contingency of war. By 1914 the draft Orders in Council accompanied the king wherever he went, as well as being kept in type in the printers' office, so that on a sudden outbreak of war they could be circulated and put in operation at a moment's notice." Such is the statement made long afterwards by Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister who brought the country into the war.

In 1914, as we all know, there came a crisis which was not surmounted.

CHAPTER III

TRADE UNIONS AND THE LABOUR PARTY

Origin of trade unions

TRADE unions may be defined as the method by which workmen have sought to defend themselves against the natural economic results of the Industrial Revolution. Before the Industrial Revolution the workman was normally (though by no means always) "on his own"; he generally owned his tools. Wages were fixed by custom. The new machinery, which rendered the old tools obsolete, was the property, not of workmen, but of "capitalists," and the workmen thus lost control over the conditions under which they worked. At the same time the new processes abolished the old forms of labour and thus rendered the customary wages obsolete. For the first time the level of wages came to be fixed by mere "competition," by economic might instead of economic right. In this struggle the capitalist had every advantage on his side unless the workmen in each industry could combine and present their demands as an organised body. Thus "trade clubs" or combinations of workmen began to appear towards the end of the eighteenth century. These early trade unions were very small and ineffective bodies, and in 1799 they were made illegal by the Combination Act, partly because they tended to interfere with war-time production and partly because all associations of workmen were suspected by the Tory government of cherishing disloyal and "Jacobinical" intentions.

Early stages, 1824–1852

The modern history of trade unions begins with the repeal of the Combination Act in 1824, near the end of Lord Liverpool's long ministry. But it was a very long time before trade unions assumed anything even distantly approaching their modern power and importance. We must think of them, until almost the end

of the nineteenth century, as including only a small minority of the workers, and those only in the highly skilled industries. Their numbers were to be counted in thousands, not in millions. "Blacklegs" (as non-unionists are called by their enemies) were far more numerous than unionists. Consequently strikes were generally unsuccessful. The story of the building up of the power of trade unionism is a magnificent example of devoted patience and energy on the part of the leaders, of loyalty and discipline on the part of their followers. If trade unions in modern times have sometimes misused their power, this should not affect our judgment of the work of the men who made trade unionism in the nineteenth century.

During the 'thirties and the 'forties the energy of working-class leaders was diverted to the struggle for "the People's Charter," *i.e.* for a democratic parliamentary suffrage. Only after the failure of the Chartist movement in 1848 did working-class leaders concentrate upon trade unionism. Their policy was the reverse of revolutionary, being, in fact, an adaptation of the economic theories of their employers. The price of goods, according to economic theory, depended upon the relation between the supply and the demand for them. The manufacturer sought to buy as cheaply and to sell as dearly as possible. The workman's "goods" was his day's work. Consequently he must sell it as dearly as possible, and in order to make it dear he must limit the supply of it. Thus arose what are conveniently called "aristocratic" trade unions, of limited membership in skilled trades, which set themselves to strengthen their position by limitation of output, limitation of hours, limitation of apprentices, and rigid demarcation of trades. The greatest of these early Victorian unions was the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (A.S.E., now known as the A.E.U.), and in 1852 it undertook the first great strike, though it would seem a small strike by modern standards, for only 13,500 men were involved, and only £43,000 disbursed in strike pay. The strikers were warmly supported by a group of people who called themselves "Christian Socialists," among whom

were Charles Kingsley, the author of many popular novels, and Thomas Hughes, the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. The strikers were starved into surrender, and compelled to sign a document renouncing trade unionism. Soon afterwards they abjured the pledge that had been extorted from them, and it is not difficult, perhaps, to sympathise with their breach of faith.

Up to this date trade unionists had not looked beyond the frontiers of their own particular industries. A wider outlook begins when the trade unions began to establish London offices, and the various secretaries in charge of these offices began to co-operate both with one another and with journalists and members of parliament who sympathised with their views. In 1868 the annual meeting known as the Trade Union Congress was established, and in 1869 we find a *Times* leading article saying, "Trade unions must be accepted as a fact, and given free scope for legitimate development." Gladstone's government in 1871 and Disraeli's government in 1875 and 1876 carried important Acts defining and extending the privileges of trade unions. One of Disraeli's Acts expressly legalised "peaceful picketing," which includes any form of "persuasion" (but not threats) whereby men on strike may discourage "blacklegs" from taking their jobs.

Trade unions and politics

Another important development belongs to the early 'seventies. The Reform Bill of 1867 had given the parliamentary vote to the class from which trade unionists were drawn, and Gladstone's Act of 1871, while benefiting trade unions in certain respects, had restricted their rights in other respects, and the restrictions were more noticed than the benefits. The General Election of 1874 was the first in which "organised Labour" exercised a measurable influence, and, being thrown on to the Conservative side, it helped to instal Disraeli in power. At the same time thirteen workingmen candidates—there was as yet no Labour Party—stood for Parliament, and two of them were elected, in mining constituencies.

Trade unionism was still essentially "aristocratic." Outside the small trade union world was a vast labouring population sunk in poverty and political apathy. But popular education was creating a new reading public among the younger generation of workmen, and scientific socialism was being popularised by writers who had studied the German works of Karl Marx. At the same time statistics were revealing for the first time, in unquestionable figures, the dreadful facts of poverty. It was shown, for example, that one-third of the whole population of London was, in the 'eighties, living "below the poverty line," *i.e.* living on earnings and in conditions insufficient to secure reasonable bodily health.

Democratisation of trade unions

The effect of these things on the trade union movement was not long in making itself manifest. Mann and Burns, two engineer trade unionists, attacked the whole philosophy of aristocratic unionism. Then, in 1889, came the great Dock Strike, which is the turning-point in the history of British trade unionism because the dockers were not "labour aristocrats," but the poorest of the poor. Mann and Burns gave them their help, and many distinguished persons in all classes of life, including the aged and celebrated Cardinal Manning, championed their cause. The dockers won "the docker's tanner" (what a modest demand it sounds!), and a National Union of General Workers was formed, with a very low subscription, for the benefit of workers in industries not yet strong enough to form unions of their own. Both trade unionism and socialism were powerfully affected. Trade unionism became democratic, and socialism was diverted for many years to come from revolutionary scheming, and devoted itself to the practical work of organising trade union policy and fighting the industrial battle on industrial lines.

The Labour Party

Two years before the Dock Strike a Scottish miner and Socialist named Keir Hardie had urged the Trade Union Congress to found a new and independent parliamentary party, but he met with no response. Undiscouraged, he formed one for himself, and was elected

to parliament for West Ham in 1892, and his first appearance at Westminster was made conspicuous by a brass band and a tweed cap. On subsequent visits he discarded the former but not the latter. In 1895 his party, called the Independent Labour Party, ran twenty-nine candidates, and they were all defeated. None the less, Keir Hardie had not laboured in vain. The Trade Union Congress was stirred to action, and in 1899 it established, in combination with the I.L.P. and two other Socialist societies, a Labour Representation Committee, which is, in fact, the foundation of the Labour Party as we know it to-day. Of this committee Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who was to be a quarter of a century later the first Labour Prime Minister, was the first secretary.

Before this Committee had been long at work a great stroke of luck, as it turned out, befell the Labour cause.

Trade unions and the law

In 1901 a strike of the employees of the Taff Vale Railway Company in South Wales occurred, in the course of which certain undoubtedly illegal actions were committed. The Company sued, not the workmen guilty of the actions, but the trade union, and the House of Lords (*i.e.* the supreme Court of Appeal so called, not the "political" House of Lords) decided that a trade union could be sued for damages committed by its members. This was not only a most unexpected interpretation of the Act of 1871 which laid down the law on the question, but it gave the new political party an admirable subject for agitation. As a result the Labour Party secured fifty-one seats in the 1906 General Election, and prevailed upon the new Liberal government to adopt and carry into law the Trade Disputes Act (1906), which not only removed the grievance of the Taff Vale judgment but gave to trade unions further privileges which they had never before claimed to possess.

In 1909 another legal decision hostile to trade unions only served to reveal the strength of the influence that modern democratic unionism could bring to bear upon parliament. Since the establishment of the Labour Party,

trade unions had used part of their funds for the payment of Labour members. A railwayman named Osborne brought an action against his union for so doing, contending that it was beyond the legal powers of trade unions as defined in the Act of 1876, and the House of Lords upheld his plea, thus depriving Labour members of their main source of support. One result was the introduction, in 1911, of state salaries (£400 a year) for members of parliament, and in 1913 an Act was passed empowering trade unions to levy a special political fund, provided that any member of the union was allowed to claim exemption from subscription to this fund without thereby forfeiting any of the benefits conferred by his membership.

It will always be a matter of dispute how far the special conditions we associate with the years immediately following the war were caused by the war, and how far they sprang from deeper causes which the war merely brought to more rapid maturity. In the three years before 1914 Labour unrest was already assuming unprecedented dimensions. In these three years there were two dock strikes, the first general railway strike, and a miners' strike which lasted a month and was only settled by the intervention of Mr. Asquith's government. In 1913 there was formed a "Triple Alliance" of miners, railwaymen and dockers for joint action on some future occasion, which seemed likely to arise in 1915. The notion of "the General Strike" was already in the air.

CHAPTER IV

IRELAND

Two deplorable facts dominate and mark the general character of Irish history in the nineteenth century. The first is that, throughout almost the whole of the century from the Act of Union (1800) onwards, Ireland was governed by a system of "coercion." That is to say, it was found impossible to govern Ireland from England without suspending, in a greater or lesser degree, the "liberties" normal to Englishmen, such as trial by jury and freedom from arbitrary arrest; and even so the government often failed to maintain order.

Coercion

The second dominant fact is the "curve" of Irish population. In 1780 the population had been about three millions; in 1815 it had risen to six, and in 1841 to over eight millions. By 1851 it had fallen well below seven millions, and continued thereafter to fall until by the end of the century it stood at a little over four millions. The rising half of the curve had been paralleled by the growth of population in Great Britain; the descending half was without parallel in any part of Europe. Yet though population in Ireland and in Great Britain rose together from 1780 to 1840, the causes of the rise were not the same. Very roughly we may say that the cause in Great Britain was coal, iron and machinery, and that the cause in Ireland was the multiplication of small peasant properties and the cultivation of the potato, a crop which yields a larger quantity of nourishment per acre than any other crop growable in these islands. Yet the potato is a poor diet, and even before the famous and terrible potato famine of 1845 the Irish people were described in an official Government Report as the worst housed, the worst clothed and the worst fed in Europe.

Irish depopulation

The Irish famine of 1845 was a catastrophe compared with which all other events in our nineteenth-century British history sink into insignificance. Three-quarters of a million died of hunger. Then began the "evictions." Small tenants could not pay their rents, and landlords, many of them English and non-resident landlords, mercilessly ejected them. About 50,000 families were evicted between 1849 and 1856. The victims emigrated to America. About two and a half million crossed the Atlantic between 1846 and 1861, and founded there a new Irish nation, inflamed with an apparently undying hatred for England. The famine

Apart from the long monotony of "coercion" and the great tragedy of the famine, the history of Ireland during our period can be grouped under three headings—religion, land and nationalism.

We saw earlier in this volume (see p. 401) that the Act of Union (1800) was accompanied with a promise that Catholics should be admitted to the Union parliament, and how that promise was broken. In the years that followed, the Protestant Irish leader, Grattan, took up the cause of Catholic Emancipation at Westminster, and Catholic Emancipation Bills passed the Commons in 1821 and 1825, only to be rejected in the Lords, Liverpool's government observing a strict neutrality towards the proposal. Meanwhile Irish patience began to wear thin. Daniel O'Connell, an Irish Catholic barrister of amazing oratorical gifts, founded a Catholic Association to agitate for the Catholic claim, and in 1828 he was elected a member of parliament for Clare, in spite of the Test Act which forbade him to take his seat. This brought matters to a head; rebellion was imminent, and Wellington's government yielded to force what they would never have yielded to argument. The dangerous lesson thus taught the Irish people was to be frequently applied in years to come. In 1869, after the Fenian outrages, Gladstone gave the Irish religious question a final settlement by disestablishing and partially disendowing the Irish Protestant Church, which The Church question

ministered to the needs of only a small minority of the people.

The Irish Land question was much more difficult to solve. In the period between Elizabeth and Cromwell three-quarters of the total area of Irish land had been taken from its Catholic owners, as rebels against British rule, and given to English "colonists." Thus there grew up a system of landlordism in Ireland entirely unlike that which prevailed in England. The landlords were of alien nationality and religion. Generally they were absentees, living in England. Their estates, being uncared for, brought little profit and were often heavily mortgaged. Land-hunger led the Irish to scramble for tenancies, the land was split into small holdings unskilfully farmed, and rents were constantly in arrears. In England, again, the landlord has always provided and maintained the farm buildings. In Ireland the landlord let nothing but the bare soil; yet the tenant, except in Ulster, had no legal property in the improvements he might make. If he improved his holding, the rent might be raised against him, and if he left, his improvements became the property of his landlord.

The Land question

Gladstone carried two Land Acts, in 1870 and 1881, which were intended to protect the tenant. The second Act secured for him his coveted "three F's"—fair rents fixed by impartial Land Courts, fixity of tenure, and freedom to sell his improvements on terminating his lease. But the system did not work well, and both British political parties were driven to accept an alternative and more drastic solution, namely, to advance money to the tenant with which he could buy out his landlord and thus become the owner of the land he farmed. The Land Purchase Act of 1903, the work of a Conservative minister, George Wyndham, practically turned Ireland into a land of peasant proprietors. At about the same time Sir Horace Plunkett founded the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society to teach the Irish farmers how to combine for the purpose of marketing their produce. He taught them perhaps, at the same time, a still more valuable lesson, namely, to seek salvation by their own

efforts instead of attributing all their woes to the malignity of the British government.

Irish Nationalism

The "Home Rule" movement in Ireland may, in the broadest sense, be said to have begun when the English first began to conquer Ireland, for at no period was English rule accepted without protest. In the more precise sense of the words, however, we may date the movement from the Reform Bill of 1867, for O'Connell's earlier agitation for the Repeal of the Union in the 'thirties and the "Young Ireland" party of 1848 had never become formidable. The Act of 1867, by lowering the Irish franchise, made possible the creation of a definitely Nationalist party which, by 1885, secured the support of practically every constituency outside Ulster, most of them by enormous majorities. The first leader of this party was a genial orator named Isaac Butt, who used, in the 'seventies, to introduce an annual resolution for Irish Home Rule, which was invariably defeated by the combined votes of both British parties. Nothing could be accomplished by such methods as these, and in 1878 Butt was ousted from the leadership of his party by a very different man, Charles Stuart Parnell.

Parnell's policy

Parnell was a Protestant landlord with an Irish-American mother, from whom he imbibed a passionate hatred of England. He set himself deliberately to make English rule in Ireland impossible. First, he developed a plan of organised "obstruction" at Westminster; he and his followers, that is to say, used the privileges of free debate to move endless resolutions and make endless speeches, which reduced the business of the House of Commons to chaos. This was met, after many all-night sittings, by the adoption of new rules of procedure, whereby debates are now conducted under a fixed time-table, proposed in advance by the government and approved by the majority. Secondly, he established a close alliance with the old Fenian or physical violence party in Ireland, and with the Land League, a kind of "trade union" of Irish tenant farmers founded by Michael Davitt in 1879, for organising resistance to landlords and, in extremities,

refusal of payment of rent, and "boycott" of unpopular land-agents. Parnell was thus in a position to say, "If you will listen to my arguments at Westminster, well and good: if you will not, I will raise hell in Ireland."

The full force of Parnell's activities fell upon Gladstone's second (1880–1885) government, already embarrassed with the problems of Egypt and South Africa. Gladstone replied with his second Land Act, but Parnell was not satisfied, for he intended to use the land question as a lever to force Home Rule. Gladstone also replied with coercion, and the imprisonment of Parnell and some of his colleagues, but disorder in Ireland only grew worse when the leader was removed from control of the storm he had raised. Parnell was released in May 1882, but immediately afterwards the Irish Secretary, Lord Frederick Cavendish, and his chief assistant were murdered in Phœnix Park, Dublin. It should be added that Parnell was entirely innocent of any complicity in the crime, which he sincerely deplored.

The three Home Rule Bills

There is little doubt that, at the time of the 1885 election, the leaders of both British parties were tentatively moving towards some kind of Home Rule solution. It was Gladstone, however, who definitely took the plunge, and when the Liberal leader identified his party with Home Rule, the Conservatives drew back and declared for the rigid maintenance of the Union. Gladstone secured, of course, the support of the eighty-five Irish Nationalists, but he lost the support of a slightly larger number of Liberals, who, calling themselves Liberal Unionists and led by Lord Hartington (afterwards Duke of Devonshire) and Joseph Chamberlain, acted thenceforth with the Conservative party. Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill was defeated in the Commons in 1886. His second Home Rule Bill was defeated in the Lords in 1893. After that nearly twenty years passed, during eleven of which the Conservatives were in power. The Conservatives believed that the Home Rule agitation was an artificial affair, and that "resolute government" combined with wise social reforms would settle the Irish problem. They certainly did much

during these years for the social welfare of Ireland, notably the Land Purchase Act of 1903, but as an attempt to divert Irish aspirations from Home Rule their policy failed entirely.

In 1912 Mr. Asquith introduced the third Home Rule Bill, and its prospects were brightened by the fact that the power of the House of Lords had been curtailed by the Parliament Act. But now Protestant Ulster sprang into the breach with a threat of rebellion, and it was made plain that the Irish problem would not be solved by simply accepting the demands of the larger Irish party. When the Great War broke out, both parties in Ireland were preparing for civil war, each reluctantly backed by one of the British political parties.

Sinn Fein

The war brought an immediate truce. Redmond, the successor of Parnell, and Carson, the Ulster leader, vied with one another in loyalty to the British government. All seemed well; but Redmond no longer controlled Nationalist Ireland. Just as, a hundred and twenty years before, Grattan's policy of moderate and "loyal" Home Rule had been undercut by the revolutionary republicanism of Wolfe Tone's "United Irishmen," so Redmond's authority was undermined by the revolutionary republican movement called Sinn Fein. There was a rebellion in Dublin in Easter Week 1916, which sought, though it failed to obtain, German assistance. The leaders of the rebellion were executed, and as "martyrs" did far more to popularise Sinn Fein than any agitation of the living could have done. In 1918 the British government tried to extend conscription to Ireland, and the triumph of Sinn Fein was complete. At the General Election after the Armistice seventy-three Sinn Fein candidates and only six Nationalists were elected.

The Free State

Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition government introduced a fourth Home Rule Bill creating two Irish parliaments, one for Ulster and one for the rest. Ulster accepted Home Rule for herself on these terms, but Sinn Fein rejected the offer as granting Southern Ireland

inadequate powers, and a deplorable war between the British government and the Sinn Feiners followed, stained by atrocities on both sides. At last, in the summer of 1921, Mr. Lloyd George decided to offer Sinn Fein what is called "Dominion self-government." Ireland was to be a "Free State" within the Empire, enjoying the same practical independence as Canada and Australia. Collins and Griffith, the moderate Sinn Fein leaders, accepted these terms, only to find that they had to conduct another war, this time against the extreme Republicans of their own party led by De Valera, to secure the acceptance of the British Treaty in Ireland. Griffith died and Collins was killed in the course of this struggle, but by March 1923 Mr. Cosgrave, their successor, had defeated the Republicans and the Free State may be said to have been established.

CHAPTER V

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

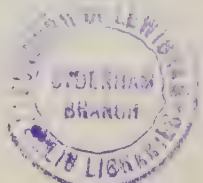
This chapter will be found, I fear, to be somewhat miscellaneous; and indeed the British Empire is the most "miscellaneous" of human creations. Not only are its provinces scattered in every quarter of the globe, separated from one another by thousands of miles of ocean; the problems of those provinces are as diverse as their latitudes and longitudes. In general terms we may say that within the British Empire there is a White Empire, an Oriental Empire and a Black Empire. The White Empire embraces what we now call the Dominions—Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa (though South Africa also contains an important section of the Black Empire). Here we have, to-day, great self-governing communities, no longer dependencies but equals. The problems here have been problems of the relations of different white peoples, English and French in Canada and English and Dutch in South Africa; also the problem of adjusting the relations between the colonial or Dominion governments and the government of Great Britain. In the Oriental Empire India occupies, of course, the predominant place; but Egypt must also be included, and the British Settlements in China. In all these countries we have been brought into touch with ancient civilisations on which we have exercised profound influences. The transformation of these ancient civilisations by contact with European methods and ideas has in turn produced new problems which are still far from solution. The Black Empire includes provinces of Central Africa and the islands of the West Indies; here we are dealing with uncivilised folk, and their very weakness and helplessness increases our responsibilities towards them.

The Three Empires

Before entering on a brief survey of the various parts of this subject, it may be well to recall how modern most of the British Empire is; how comparatively little there was of it in 1815. At that date Canada consisted of two small colonies on the northern shores of the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, a French colony, and a British colony peopled not from England but by the Loyalists from the United States. Australia was little more than the convict settlement of Botany Bay. New Zealand had not been touched. South Africa was no more than Cape Town, newly acquired from the Dutch as a useful station on the route to India. In India the process of conquest was already nearing completion, though the Punjab had not yet been touched, but we had no responsibilities in Egypt or China till long afterwards. The only African colonies were small settlements between the Gold Coast and Cape Verde. Nothing better illustrates the growth of the Empire than the fact that, in 1815, the British West Indies were still, if measured by their trade, much the most important part of the Empire except India.

The Empire in 1815

In fact, in 1815 and for many years afterwards, most British statesmen realised that a great empire had been lost by the revolt of the American colonies, and hardly realised that a new and greater one was growing up to replace it; or if they realised this, they were not greatly interested, for it was assumed that colonial empires were of necessity temporary structures. Colonial self-government, they held, must mean colonial independence in the long run. Modern pride and interest in the Empire as a uniquely valuable political experiment, a kind of League or Commonwealth of Nations, combining unity with diversity, independence with inter-dependence, is hardly apparent until the 'seventies. The first Imperial (or Colonial) Conference was not held until the first Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887.



(i) *The White Empire*

Canada has been the pioneer in colonial self-government. For twenty years after Waterloo the system established by Pitt in 1791 prevailed. Each colony, Upper (or English) Canada and Lower (or French) Canada, was ruled by an English governor, a nominated "House of Lords" and an elected "House of Commons." The governors chose their ministers and controlled policy, and the powers of the elected chambers were limited to advice, protest, control of taxation, and veto on legislation —the powers, in fact, of an English House of Commons in Stuart times. Such a system can never be a permanent one. In both colonies discontent grew, complicated by rivalries between British and French in Lower Canada, and between old British "Loyalists" (see p. 377) and new immigrants from Britain in Upper Canada. In 1836 there were small rebellions in both colonies, and Melbourne's government sent out Lord Durham to report on the situation.

Canada

Lord Durham was a member of a small group of Colonial Reformers who ardently believed that a great future lay before the British Empire. The leading spirit among them was Gibbon Wakefield, whose Emigration Societies did more than anything else to divert part at least of the stream of emigrants from Great Britain to the British colonies instead of the United States. Durham's celebrated Report on Canada is a turning-point in imperial history, because, besides recommending the union of the two Colonies (which was a temporary expedient), it recommended that they should receive full self-government; that Canadian ministers must be responsible to the Canadian parliament, and that the Governor must stand outside politics, occupying the position that the king, whose representative he was, occupied in England. This system was fully adopted in 1846, when Russell's government sent out Lord Elgin as Governor of Canada. It proved an entire success. The completeness of Canadian self-government was illustrated when, in 1859, Canada

The Durham Report

successfully asserted her right to impose duties on imports from Britain as well as from other countries.

In 1867 the difficulty of providing "Home Rule" for the French minority (as it had now become) was solved by the establishment of a Federal system of government, modelled on that of the United States. Under this system a separation is made between the spheres of central and local government, and the central, or Federal, government of the whole Dominion is expressly debarred from encroaching upon the spheres of the various provinces. The new Federal Dominion included not only the old Upper and Lower Canadas, henceforth the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, but also the old British colonies on the south of the St. Lawrence, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, and the new colony of British Columbia in the far west. Sir John Macdonald, the first Prime Minister of the Dominion, at once undertook the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the central or "prairie" colonies of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan developed and filled the gap between Ontario and British Columbia.

Federation

The senior Australian colony is New South Wales, and its history begins with the convict settlement at Botany Bay in 1788. Free settlers began to arrive a few years later, but for a long time they were but a small trickle of immigrants. The other Australian colonies, Victoria, Queensland, South and West Australia, were founded by free immigrants who wanted to keep clear of the convicts and their descendants. In 1833 the total white population was only 60,000, of whom nearly half were convicts. In 1840 the exportation of convicts was stopped, and in 1850 there was a free population of 260,000. In the same year the Australian Colonies were given self-government, and in the next few years the discovery of gold quadrupled the population. In the course of the next twenty years the whole continent was explored, a feat comparable with the exploration of Central Africa by Livingstone and other explorers, mostly British, at about the same time.

Australia

Australia had no internal problem like that presented by the French in Canada to force upon her the necessity of Federation. The six[1] colonies formed themselves into a single Australian Commonwealth in 1900, mainly on account of the necessity of developing a uniform policy to meet the danger of immigration from China and Japan. The Australian Commonwealth stands for a "White Australian" policy, seeking thus to preserve itself from such insoluble "colour problems" as are created by the Negroes in the United States and the Kaffirs in South Africa.

New Zealand

New Zealand was proclaimed a British colony in 1840, largely owing to the efforts of Gibbon Wakefield and Lord Durham. Six little colonial settlements were founded, which united in a single self-governing colony in 1876. The colony consists of two islands of about equal size, the northern one containing a native population of about 100,000 Maoris, one of the most attractive and educable of "savage" peoples, many of whom had been converted to Christianity by British missionaries before the British colony was established. There were some wars between the colonists and the Maoris in the 'sixties, but to-day the natives play an active and valuable part in the life of the colony, whereas the aboriginal tribes of Australia seem to be, by comparison, incapable of European civilisation.

South Africa

South Africa has had a much more sensational history than the other Dominions, and its affairs have twice at least, as we have shown, decisively affected the course of British politics at home. After the Napoleonic wars Great Britain took over in Cape Colony a Dutch population of old-fashioned, slave-owning farmers. The Boers, as they were called, resented British government,

[1] The sixth, Tasmania, was used as a convict station in the early part of the nineteenth century. It is a singular fact that Tasmania was discovered by a Dutchman, Tasman, in 1642, long before the existence of the great continent close by was realised. Interesting evidence of this is the fact that Swift places his "Island of Lilliput" (1726) a thousand miles north-west of Tasmania, *i.e.* in the middle of Australia!

and resented still more the activities of British missionaries among the Kaffirs. The climax came with the emancipation of their slaves, and in 1836 ten thousand of the more resolute of them, under the leadership of Pretorius, made their "exodus," or Great Trek, into the lands beyond the Orange River, where they founded communities outside the sphere of British control. Their two republics, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, were, in fact, formally recognised as independent in the early 'fifties, though Great Britain had secured the north-eastern coast-line up to the Portuguese boundary by establishing the colony of Natal in 1843.

In the 'seventies the Boer Republics began to experience the forward movement of the new British imperialism. The discovery of diamonds at Kimberley, on the borders of the Free State, turned interest inland. The formidable military confederacy of the Zulus threatened Natal and could not be subdued without encroachment on the independence of the Transvaal. Further, the success of Canadian Federation fired the Colonial Office with an ambition to establish a Federation of South Africa. We have already seen how Beaconsfield's government annexed the Transvaal in 1877, and Gladstone's government, after long hesitation and an unfortunate and unintended outbreak of fighting which involved the defeat of a small British force at Majuba, restored the Transvaal its independence in 1881.

The Zulu War and Majuba

When Gladstone abandoned the Transvaal in 1881 it was regarded as a very unimportant country. Five years later it was found to contain in its very centre the richest gold-field in the world. We have already described the circumstances which led up to, and the chief events of, the South African War of 1899 to 1902. The long preliminary struggle was made the more dramatic by the fact that the two principles which were striving for mastery, Dutch separatism and British imperialism, were vividly personified in the two leading figures of South African politics.

1881–1899

Paul Kruger, the President of the Transvaal, was in many respects an impressive figure, characteristic of the seventeenth rather than the nineteenth century. His memory went back to the days when, as a boy of ten, he had followed Pretorius in the Great Trek. He was almost entirely uneducated, except in the Bible, and like the old Puritans he drew his inspiration more from the Old Testament than the New. For the native races he had no more sympathy than Joshua had for the Canaanites, and he detested and despised modern civilisation, though he appreciated its military equipment. He was, in fact, an exceedingly shrewd diplomatist, with a strong sense of the value of money and guns. He invested the revenue he drew from the Uitlander gold-miners in the latest French artillery, and when the war came his guns outranged the best that the British army could produce. We may hold that he had no right to refuse to allow the Uitlanders to become citizens of his republic and to take their share in the management of its affairs, but, after all, his argument was very like that by which we are accustomed to defend the policy of a "White Australia." If the Uitlanders were allowed the vote and all the other facilities they required, it was certain that, with their numbers, their wealth and their organisation, they would utterly transform the character and institutions of his country.

President Kruger

On the other side was Cecil Rhodes, who had made a fortune at Kimberley when barely out of his 'teens, and then betaken himself to Oxford to complete his education. Returning to South Africa he entered the Cape Parliament in the same year as the Transvaal recovered its independence. In 1885 he secured the annexation of Bechuanaland, which, though barren and unprofitable in itself, was the key to South Africa; for, in British hands, it blocked the possibility of union between the Dutch republics and German South-west Africa, and opened the way from Cape Colony to the north. In 1889 he secured the foundation of the Chartered Company for trading and mining south of the Zambesi. In 1893 the warlike

Cecil Rhodes

Matabele were conquered, and Rhodesia established. The Dutch republics were virtually surrounded. Meanwhile Rhodes had become Prime Minister of the Cape and a leader among the gold-miners of the Transvaal. The Jameson Raid of 1896 (see p. 516) was the tragedy of his career, and led to his retirement from his Prime Ministership. He had no direct share in the negotiations that led up to the South African War. None the less that war was, in a real sense, the climax of his policy.

The South African Union

We have seen how, in 1906, the Liberal government of Campbell-Bannerman granted complete self-government to the conquered colonies which formerly had been the two Dutch republics. There were now four [1] self-governing colonies in British South Africa. Dutch and British populations were almost exactly equal. Natal was preponderantly British and the Free State preponderantly Dutch, but in the two larger colonies Dutch and British were fairly equally balanced. The arguments in favour of some form of combination were as strong as they had previously been in Canada and Australia. There was need of co-operation in trade and of a common policy in regard to the vast native population and to immigration from India. In 1909 the South African Union was achieved. It is called a Union, and not a Federation, for it established, in fact, a much more centralised system of government than that of either Canada or Australia. It is a notable fact that all the Prime Ministers of the Union hitherto (1927) have been Dutchmen, and all of them loyal to their membership of the Empire.

(ii) *The Oriental Empire*

The connection between England and India has now lasted more than three centuries and a quarter, since the foundation of the East India Company in 1600. Within that long period lies what we may call the period of conquest,

[1] Five, if we include Rhodesia: but Rhodesia did not join the Union.

barely a hundred years long; we may roughly date it from Clive's capture of Arcot in 1751 to the submission of the Punjab in 1849. Before the time of Clive the Company was content to trade, and asked for no more territory than sufficed to hold its small and widely scattered trading stations on the coast. It was a policy, in fact, like that which we pursued in China in quite recent times. After 1849 British domination of India was complete. About a third of the country consisted of native states, but their rulers recognised, both in theory and in practice, the overruling authority of the British government. Such wars of conquest, or attempted conquest, as occurred were wars against states beyond the geographical frontiers of India—Burmah and Afghanistan.

It will be seen that our official starting-point in this Book, the battle of Waterloo, falls about two-thirds of the way through the century of conquest. During the Napoleonic wars our government had encountered the hostility of the Rajah of Mysore in southern, and of the Mahratta Confederacy in central India. Mysore had been conquered in 1799, and the Mahratta Confederacy was suppressed, and its territories annexed to the Presidency of Bombay by Lord Hastings in 1818. Then followed a period of comparative peace, broken in 1839–1841 by an unwise attempt to conquer Afghanistan which ended in the destruction of the invading army. The 'forties saw the annexation of the Indus valley, first Sinde in 1843 and afterwards the warlike Sikhs of the Punjab in 1846–1849. These Sikh wars involved more hard fighting than any other wars in British India.

The last stages of conquest

Meanwhile the East India Company itself had been strangely transformed. Its original purpose had been trade, and it had enjoyed a monopoly. In 1813 the monopoly was abolished, and in 1833 it was forbidden to carry on any more trading operations, on the sound principle that government and commerce should not be in the same hands. The East India Company had become, in fact, since Pitt's India Act of 1784 (see p. 390)

The East India Company

a vast Civil Service through which the British Cabinet at home controlled the government of India. It was abolished in 1858, after the Mutiny.

With the growth of British dominion in India came a growing sense of responsibility for the welfare of the Indian peoples. The beginnings of that sense of responsibility can be traced back to the impeachment of Warren Hastings in 1787, and in 1828 Lord William Bentinck was sent out as Governor-General to put in practice on a more extensive scale than before the ideals that had animated some, at any rate, of Hastings' enemies. Bentinck abolished suttee—the burning of Hindu widows—and undertook the suppression of the Thugs, a caste of hereditary murderers. His assistant, Macaulay, the famous historian, drew up an Indian Penal Code, and induced the British government to adopt English, instead of one or more of the native languages, as the medium of education in the new state schools. The India Act of 1833 which abolished the trading rights of the Company declared that the interests of native subjects were to be consulted in preference to those of European whenever the two came in conflict,[1] and promised that no Indian should be excluded from any office under the Company on grounds of race or religion.

Indian social reform

Under Governor-General Dalhousie (1848–1856) "Westernising" innovation and reform was pushed forward at an accelerated pace, and every opportunity was taken of annexing native states, not because their rulers threatened British authority, but because they stood in the way of British enterprise and philanthropy. Dalhousie introduced the railway and the telegraph and a regular postal system, extended roads and canals, and supplemented Macaulay's "English" schools with elementary schools employing the local native languages. It was an age of unbounded optimism, which finds expression in

Lord Dalhousie

[1] This is a very remarkable declaration: it may be doubted if any imperial power had ever explicitly adopted such a principle before in the history of the world.

the words of Macaulay. "It may be," he wrote, "that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown our system; that having become instructed in European knowledge they may, in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not; but whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English history."

The difficulty of the policy thus eloquently described lay in the fact that Indians for the most part did not share Macaulay's admiration of European efficiency. Indian peoples are naturally proud of their ancient traditions, especially those connected with their religion. Yet to British administrators eager for Indian welfare those institutions, the Hindu caste system for example, seemed to be just the very barriers in the way of Indian progress that it was most necessary to remove. British schools, British missionaries and British railways seemed to be all parts of an immense conspiracy to undermine the whole framework of Hindu society and religion. Thus the bustling and benevolent Governor-Generalship of Lord Dalhousie was immediately followed by the Mutiny of 1857.

The Mutiny

The Indian Mutiny was, as its name implies, a revolt of native soldiery in the British Indian army and not a rebellion of native peoples. The Sepoys had a special and immediate religious grievance connected with the greasing of cartridges with animal fat. None the less it was an expression of the more general unrest we have just described. The area of trouble was confined to the Upper Ganges valley, and the chief events centred round Delhi, the old capital of the Moguls; Lucknow, the capital of Oudh, recently annexed by Dalhousie, and Cawnpore, also in Oudh. At Delhi the mutineers were the besieged, and the city was captured by the heroic energy of Nicholson. At Cawnpore a small British garrison with about five hundred women and children was brutally and treacherously murdered. At Lucknow the British garrison maintained a heroic and finally successful resistance till the relieving forces arrived.

At first sight the Mutiny might seem to belong to that

rare class of incidents, a great event without consequences. Provoked by anti-European prejudice, it failed, and "Western" innovation went forward more rapidly than ever. But the Mutiny had a consequence, and a very unfortunate one. It destroyed the old friendly confidence between British and Indian peoples. Material progress increased, but the idea of the increasing co-operation of Indians in the actual work of government was silently dropped. "Remember Cawnpore!" was long a fatal watchword, keeping the sympathies of the two races apart.

When the nineteenth century entered upon its last quarter a new "Indian unrest" arose. In many respects it was curiously unlike the earlier unrest that had culminated in the Mutiny. It was indeed itself a "Western" product, being entirely confined to the class of Western-educated (or half-educated) Indians produced by Macaulay's schools. Indian nationalism to-day has only one language in which north can communicate with south and east with west, and that language is English. The movement began, perhaps, with the so-called "Ilbert Bill" of 1880. This was a proposal of Gladstone's government to give to Indians certain legal privileges hitherto enjoyed only by Europeans in India. A furious agitation was raised by the British mercantile community in India, and the Bill was consequently dropped. This taught the Indians a lesson. If one side could bully the Government into withdrawing reforms, the other side could bully it into granting them.

Modern unrest

In 1885 the Indian National Congress was founded. Its founders were Indians of high character who fully appreciated the value of the British connection, and its programme included not only demands for some measure of representative government and the admission of Indians to administrative posts, but also a scheme of social reforms designed to remedy the more glaring evils of the caste system, and the degradation of women in Indian life. Unfortunately Congress found that social questions provoked acute divisions among its members, whereas criticism

of British methods at once restored a united front. Thus Congress degenerated into an organ of unmeasured anti-British agitation, and uncritical glorification of Hindu tradition.

The first really formidable explosion of anti-British hostility was occasioned by Lord Curzon's Partition of Bengal in 1905. This partition, designed simply for convenience, was resented as an insult to the greatest of Hindu provinces, and when shortly afterwards Lord Curzon, for quite other reasons, resigned his Viceroyalty, the agitators believed they had scored a great triumph. At the end of the same year the Liberals returned to power in England, and John Morley, well known as an advocate of Home Rule for Ireland, was appointed Secretary of State for India. "If for Ireland why not for India?" thought the Congress party, and agitation of every kind, from assassination to boycott of British goods, redoubled. In 1909 came the long-expected "Morley–Minto"[1] reforms, introducing a very limited and artificial system of representative government, without in any way reducing British authority. If their purpose was to afford a temporary gratification to Indian vanity and to assuage unrest, these reforms may be held to have succeeded, but they provided no permanent solution.

Curzon and Morley

So matters stood when the Great War came. Of the profound effect of the Great War upon India and the establishment of the present Indian constitution, which goes far beyond anything contemplated by John Morley, some account will be given in the last Book of this history.

China, like India, is a vast and densely populated territory; between them they contain nearly half the population of the world. But China, unlike India, has long been a more or less united empire with a traditional hatred of "foreign devils," and in the early part of the nineteenth century Canton was the only port open to foreign trade. British trade with Canton was part of the monopoly of the East India Company. When the East

China

[1] Lord Minto was Viceroy at the time.

India Company ceased to be a trading concern the British government began to interest itself in the conditions of trade with China, and grievances on both sides led, in 1840, to war, as a result of which the British annexed Hong-Kong, and various ports, including Shanghai, were opened to European trade. Another war, in 1857 and the following years, brought a British force to Peking, and led to the establishment of European trading stations at Hankow, five hundred miles up the Yangtse river. At about the same time the Russian empire extended itself to Vladivostok on the Pacific coast. In 1894–1895 China was decisively defeated by Japan, and this event led Russia to secure Port Arthur; thereupon Germany occupied Kiao-Chow and Great Britain Wei-hai-wei.

The anti-European movements

Though European occupation only touched China at a few isolated points the process of "Westernisation," through commerce, railways and missionaries, was spreading apace, and producing the same reactions as in India—on the one hand, a rapid superficial imitation of Western methods, and on the other a profound irritation at Western influences. The latter of these reactions provoked the Boxer[1] Rebellion of 1900, when the Europeans in Peking were besieged for two months in the buildings of the European legations (*i.e.* the buildings of the various diplomatic representatives), and were widely believed to have been massacred. The Boxer rebellion roughly corresponds in Chinese history with the Mutiny in the history of British India. Both were movements of pure reaction and were suppressed, but the tendencies they had protested against continued to give offence, and the anti-European movement revived in other guises.

The Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905, fought mainly on Chinese territory, greatly stimulated the awakening of China. It showed that an Oriental nation could defeat one of the Great Powers of Europe. A movement for a thorough

[1] "Boxer" is a translation of the name of a Chinese anti-European Society, which called itself "the fist of righteous harmony."

reform of the Chinese system of government was headed by some of the best of the provincial governors, and led in 1911 to the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty of emperors and the establishment of a Republic under the reformer Yuan Shih-kai. It might be foreseen that the new republic would not indefinitely tolerate the nineteenth-century treaties which had handed over some of the best ports of China to European Powers.

Egypt

At about the time of the battle of Waterloo an Albanian adventurer named Mehemet Ali made himself master of Egypt. How his wars with Turkey in the 'thirties affected British policy has already been related (see p. 492). His successors lacked his ability, and in the 'seventies the Khedive Ismail reduced Egypt to bankruptcy. One result of this was our purchase of the Suez Canal shares; another was the establishment by Great Britain and France of a "Dual Control" over Egyptian finances, in the interests of those who had invested their money in Egyptian government stock (see p. 509). In 1881 there was an Egyptian rising, under Arabi Pasha, against the Dual Control, and Britain and France had either to withdraw or to conquer the country. France withdrew, and Britain went on alone. Wolseley was sent out with a force which defeated Arabi at Tel-el-Kebir, and, though Egypt was not formally made a British province, Sir Evelyn Baring (afterwards Lord Cromer), as chief adviser of the Khedive Tewfik (Ismail being deposed), became practically the ruler of the country for the next twenty-four years (1883-1907).

Lord Cromer

Under Cromer's rule Egypt was transformed. When he first took over the government, its chief instruments were the *kurbash* and the *corvée*. The *kurbash* was a whip, and it was usually applied to the soles of the feet; it extracted taxes, and induced witnesses in court to swear whatever the government wanted them to swear. The *corvée* was a system of forced labour for the annual dredging of the miserably inadequate irrigation canals of the Nile. Lord Cromer, it is said, gave Egypt "water and

justice." As a result prosperity greatly increased, and would have increased still more but for the rapid growth of population which that prosperity rendered possible. Yet material prosperity no more reconciled the Egyptians than the peoples of India to British rule; in fact, in Egypt as in India, contact with European ideas kindled notions of self-sufficiency and ambitions for self-government. Lord Cromer retired, and his successors were perhaps less wise than he. A new generation arose that could not remember the tyranny from which British intervention had delivered the Egyptian peasantry. After the Great War a demand arose for independence which, with certain reservations to safeguard British interests, was granted in 1922.

The Soudan belongs properly to the "Black Empire," seeing that it is inhabited by a primitive negro population, but its history is so closely intertwined with that of Egypt that it had better be treated here. The Soudan was conquered by Mehemet Ali, and abominably misgoverned by his successors, who regarded it simply as a hunting-ground for slave-raiders. In 1881, when Arabi was attempting to deliver Egypt from Europe, a more formidable rebel, styling himself the Mahdi, or Messenger of Allah, undertook to deliver the Soudan from Egypt. In 1883 the Egyptian government was allowed by the British authorities to send an army against the Mahdi under a retired British officer named Hicks, but it was totally destroyed at El Obeid. The British government refused to undertake the reconquest of the Soudan, but sent General Gordon and Colonel Stewart to Khartoum to report on the situation and to assist the garrisons at Khartoum and elsewhere to return to Egypt. Difficulties and misunderstandings arose, for which the blame must be divided between Gordon and the British government, and Gordon was besieged in Khartoum and killed in the storming of the city (January 1885).

The Soudan

Thirteen years passed; Egyptian prosperity revived; the imperialist movement reached its climax under Chamberlain in England; and Kitchener was sent to reconquer the

Soudan with an Anglo-Egyptian army. From that date onwards (1898) the Soudan was nominally the joint possession of Great Britain and Egypt; actually it was under British rule, and administered by British Civil servants under a British governor. When Egypt secured its independence in 1922, the Egyptians demanded that the Soudan should be handed over to them. This entirely unreasonable demand was, of course, refused.

(iii) *The Black Empire*

The oldest part of our "Black Empire" lies in the West Indies, where Jamaica, our principal island, was acquired by Cromwell more than a hundred years before Wolfe captured Quebec. In Jamaica only two per cent. of the population are British settlers, four-fifths of the remainder being imported African negroes. Indeed the total European population of this group of colonies is only equal to that of a fair-sized English town—about 100,000. Yet in 1815, as we have already remarked, the West Indies was, after India, the most important market within the British Empire. These colonies have been stationary; indeed in some respects they have declined. "Progress" administered to them two severe blows in the first half of our period. The abolition of slavery might have been a severe blow in any case, but the sugar-growing slave-owners made their position much worse by their obstinate opposition to every suggestion for the introduction of humaner methods during the ten years preceding abolition. After the event Jamaica was troubled by a long series of feuds between the white and black populations. Then came free trade. The abolition of the protective duties on sugar followed shortly after the abolition of the Corn Law, and henceforth Jamaican sugar enjoyed no artificial advantage over the more cheaply grown sugar of Brazil. In another respect, too, the history of Jamaica has moved in the opposite direction from that of the White Empire. In 1815 the colonists in Jamaica had enjoyed for over a hundred

The West Indies

years the privilege of a legislative assembly like those of the American colonies. In 1865, after a negro rebellion had been suppressed with atrocious cruelty, the legislative assembly was abolished, and the government entrusted entirely to a British governor. Since that date a legislative council has been formed, but most of its members are nominated by the governor. It is now recognised that principles of self-government are not appropriate to a colony where only a handful of the population is white.

By far the greater part of our Black Empire now lies in Africa, and, though a few small colonies on the West Coast date from a much earlier period, the great bulk of this section of the Empire was acquired in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, between 1886 and 1900. It was a direct result of the wonderful adventure of Central African exploration in which British explorers, such as Livingstone, Speke and Stanley, played the leading parts. The greatest of these African protectorates is Nigeria, whose black population (15,000,000), though only a twentieth of that of India, is not far short of the white population of all the Dominions taken together. These African territories have been further increased since the war by the acquisition of most of the German African colonies under "mandates" from the League of Nations. The problems involved in the government of these dependencies and the education of their backward peoples are too vast and various to be discussed here. Also, we are still only at the beginnings of our work in this sphere, and it is too early to judge it. In West Africa the natives retain possession of the land, and the government is carried on, wherever possible, through native chiefs. In Kenya, on the eastern coast, on the other hand, and in Rhodesia, much of the best land has been taken over and leased to white settlers who employ native labour.

African Colonies

Nor must we forget that the Union of South Africa, though we reckon it with the White Empire, is also a part of the Black Empire. The British and Dutch populations combined are only about one-third of the black population.

Native problems have from first to last vitally affected the history of the European settlers. It was difference of opinion on the treatment of natives that led to the Great Trek, and need for a unified policy towards the Kaffirs was one of the chief motives of the Union of 1909. The rivalry of British and Dutch is, we may hope, becoming a matter of past history, but the rivalry of Black and White grows more acute as the native becomes more and more fit to compete with white men in the labour market. Native problems are providing a severe test of South African statesmanship in our own day.

CHAPTER VI

SOCIETY IN GENERAL: LITERATURE

It is impossible in a short history to do more than glance at all those multifarious subjects that lie outside the sphere of what may be called "politics" in the widest sense of that term. Yet the number of topics that seem to demand attention is beyond reckoning.

Perhaps the sudden transformation wrought by railways affected the lives of ordinary people more than any other event of the age. Take a single example. On November 14, 1834, Peel was suddenly wanted, to assume office as Prime Minister. He was somewhere in Italy, and a messenger, travelling night and day, found him in Rome on November 25. Peel reached London on December 9. In fact the message travelled from England to Peel, and Peel travelled from Rome to London in very much the same way as, nineteen centuries before, Julius Cæsar might have sent a message from Britain to Rome, summoning an officer from Rome to Britain. Yet twenty years later Peel could have been summoned by telegraph and made his journey by railway. How these and other mechanical inventions have transformed the methods of trade, the methods of war, the intercourse of nations, and the comfort of individuals is well known to all. There is a danger, perhaps, that we may attach too much importance to such things. That certainly was the opinion of most of the greater thinkers and leaders of the Victorian age. These great men warned their generation again and again that comfort is not civilisation, that wealth is only worth having if it is wisely used, and that machinery is after all only machinery: it multiplies power for evil as much as it multiplies power for good, and is only a real gain in so far

Machinery

as the good impulses exceed the bad impulses in its users. Let us then pass to very different subjects.

We have seen how in the first half of the eighteenth century religion, both Church and Dissent, was asleep, and how Wesley and his allies began a great revival. That revival had spread wide and deep by 1815, and the atheism of the hated French Revolution had provoked a revival of Sunday observance and religious decorum among the aristocracy. But the official leaders of the Church were still only half awake. Bishops were mostly amiable and indolent, and very rich; and many of the clergy made little or no pretence of attending to their duties. The nineteenth century was marked by a succession of religious movements which, inspired by different ideals and often far from friendly to each other, contrived between them a general revival of religious energy within the Churches. The Evangelical Movement, closely associated in origin with Wesley's crusade, continued to make progress. Working on very different lines, the Oxford Movement of the 'thirties revived the conception of the Church as a world-wide, Divine, Catholic society, of which the Church of England was but one branch. It exalted the sanctity of the priesthood, the importance of regular and frequent Communion, and brought back artistic beauty into the Church services. About twenty years later the group who assumed at first the provocative name of "Christian Socialists" reminded their generation that those who accepted the Gospel of Love were bound to make active war, as Christians, upon all that was unjust and tyrannical in the relations of rich and poor.

Religious movements

But while the Churches were gaining in vigour they seemed doomed to lose more and more of their adherents. Science was making gigantic strides; the doctrine of evolution destroyed the credit of the account of Creation contained in the Book of Genesis, and overthrew the theory of the "verbal inspiration" of the Bible, on which most simple Christians had pinned their faith. At the same time historical criticism of the Bible,

Religion and science

mainly carried out by Churchmen themselves, proved that much of the so-called history of the Old Testament was no more than a collection of legends. It needed both insight and faith to realise, amid the first shock of these discoveries, that though many beliefs popularly associated with Christianity had been shattered, Christianity itself, as a religion, was untouched and, by merely scientific and historical discoveries, untouchable. Hence the long and mistaken conflict between "Religion and Science" which perplexed and distressed many of the most thoughtful men and women of the age.

Indeed, wherever we look in nineteenth-century life, we find the influence of the forward thrust of science and scientific invention. It created new standards of comfort and, we may even say, new habits of daily existence; it transformed our attitude to religion. What of its effect on the arts? It is a mysterious and deplorable fact that, in the midst of the new productivity of the Industrial Revolution, we lost the knack of making common and useful objects beautiful. Beautiful pictures no doubt were painted and sold to the rich; but beautiful tables and chairs were no more on the market. Formerly the handicraftsman had made these things beautiful without perhaps giving much thought to the matter. He was an unconscious artist. The machine superseded him, and only towards the end of the nineteenth century did we realise what we had lost. Then the despised "old furniture" still to be found in the cottages of the poor began to command high prices, and the manufacturer began to copy the designs of the old handicraftsman. Still worse was the fate of architecture. It was a deplorable coincidence that the period of our greatest development in wealth and population was also the period when architecture reached its lowest levels of ugliness.

Industry and art

But the products of scientific invention were not only ugly in themselves: they destroyed the natural beauty of large tracts of country. The garden of England was, in large areas, transformed into a dirty and slovenly workshop.

In the long run these things did not escape notice. A movement arose to preserve the beauty that still survived and to repair, so far as might be, what had been destroyed. Two men above others, in the second half of the century, taught English people to appreciate the spiritual importance of beauty in daily life, John Ruskin and William Morris. In the writings of both there is much that is fantastic and utopian; both of them assailed the Industrial Revolution and modern mechanical power as things altogether evil in themselves; both did much to promote the trend of ideas which has developed into modern socialism. We may or may not accept the socialistic element in their teaching, but their main lesson, that beauty is, with truth and virtue, one of the three primary good things of life, they taught wisely and well, and the lesson has, in part at least, been learnt.

Ruskin and Morris

Two other great writers of a slightly earlier date, Macaulay and Carlyle, typify the conflict of ideas in the Victorian age. Both were historians, and both made history a matter of vital interest to the ordinary man as few have succeeded in doing since. Macaulay took his subjects mostly from English history. Carlyle first revealed the greatness of Cromwell, and he also first displayed to English readers the romance and tragic grandeur of the French Revolution. Macaulay was an optimist; to him all the great modern developments in machinery and politics were "progress." Carlyle cared for none of these things. He despised parliamentary constitutions and democratic self-government, and regarded industrial competition as the Gospel of Mammon; he upheld the soldier against the politician, the saint against the scientist, the monk against the merchant.

Macaulay and Carlyle

The novel, an invention of the eighteenth century, became in the nineteenth the most important branch of literature. Scott's *Waverley Novels* did more to popularise interest in the heroic past than even the historical work of Macaulay and Carlyle. Dickens, who published his first novel, *Pickwick*, four years after the death of Scott,

The novelists

in the year of Queen Victoria's accession, reached a still wider public. He created more famous characters than all the other novelists put together, and by reason alike of his genius and of its limitations deserves the title of "the Cockney Shakespeare." Thackeray depicted the *Vanity Fair* of the upper class society, and Charlotte Brontë brought into fiction the loneliness and the grimness of life amid the Yorkshire moors. Later in the century George Meredith devised a new type of novel, the intellectual or philosophic comedy, and Thomas Hardy wrote his tragic tales of "Wessex" peasantry. In the last twenty years of the century Stevenson and Kipling extended the geographical range of the novel to India and the Pacific Islands. These are only the greatest names amidst a host of writers. Novel writing has become a national industry, in which men and women compete on equal terms, while for many readers novels and newspapers make up the sum-total of readable literature.

The poets

At the date of Waterloo, Byron, Keats and Shelley were still near the beginnings of their brief careers. Byron and Shelley were both powerfully influenced by the broader aspects of the French Revolution, whereas Keats was "an Elizabethan born out of due time." All three were dead by 1824, and though Wordsworth and Coleridge still lived they had ceased to write great poetry. The accession of Victoria nearly coincides with the beginning of the fame of Tennyson, the typical Victorian poet, the one great poet since Dryden who has also been a great Poet Laureate. In many respects Tennyson is typical of his age: he represents it in its eager quest of religious truth amidst the perplexities entailed by modern science: also, in his weaker moments, he represents its rather vain-glorious self-satisfaction and contempt for foreigners. Browning's vivid and versatile genius touched an immense variety of problems and portrayed a whole gallery of interesting characters; he is our greatest master of the versified short story. Matthew Arnold's poems express with poignant sincerity the feelings of those who doubted whether good or evil predominated in the headlong rush of modern

"progress," and FitzGerald's version of the Persian stanzas of Omar Khayyám expressed in melodious verse an ancient doctrine, widely held in all ages—"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

Towards the end of the Victorian age British music began to revive after a long period of eclipse. The comic operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, written between 1875 and 1889, are masterpieces in their own class. Before the end of the century Parry, Stanford, and Elgar had established their reputations, and British music was being enriched by the re-discovery of the treasures contained in the old folk-songs of the "four nations" of the British Isles. Music

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D. 1819. Peterloo.
„ 1824. Repeal of the Combination Act.
„ 1827. Battle of Navarino.
„ 1829. Catholic Emancipation Act.
„ 1832. First Reform Act.
„ 1833. Abolition of Slavery.
„ 1833. Ashley's first Factory Act.
„ 1836. The Great Trek in South Africa.
„ 1838. Lord Durham's Report on Canada.
„ 1846. The Repeal of the Corn Law.
„ 1848. The Chartist fiasco.
„ 1851. The Great Exhibition.
„ 1854–1856. The Crimean War.
„ 1857. The Indian Mutiny.
„ 1865. Death of Palmerston.
„ 1867. Second Reform Act.
„ 1867. Federation of Canada.
„ 1870. Forster's Education Act.
„ 1875. Purchase of the Suez Canal shares.
„ 1878. Congress of Berlin.
„ 1881. Battle of Majuba.
„ 1884. Gordon at Khartoum.
„ 1886. Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill.
„ 1889. The Great Dock Strike.
„ 1896. The Jameson Raid.
„ 1898. Reconquest of the Soudan.
„ 1899–1902. The South African War.
„ 1903. Chamberlain's Tariff Reform campaign.
„ 1909. Mr. Lloyd George's Budget.
„ 1911. The Parliament Act.
„ 1911. Payment of members.
„ 1911. The Insurance Act.
„ 1912. The third Home Rule Bill introduced.
„ 1914. The Great War begins.

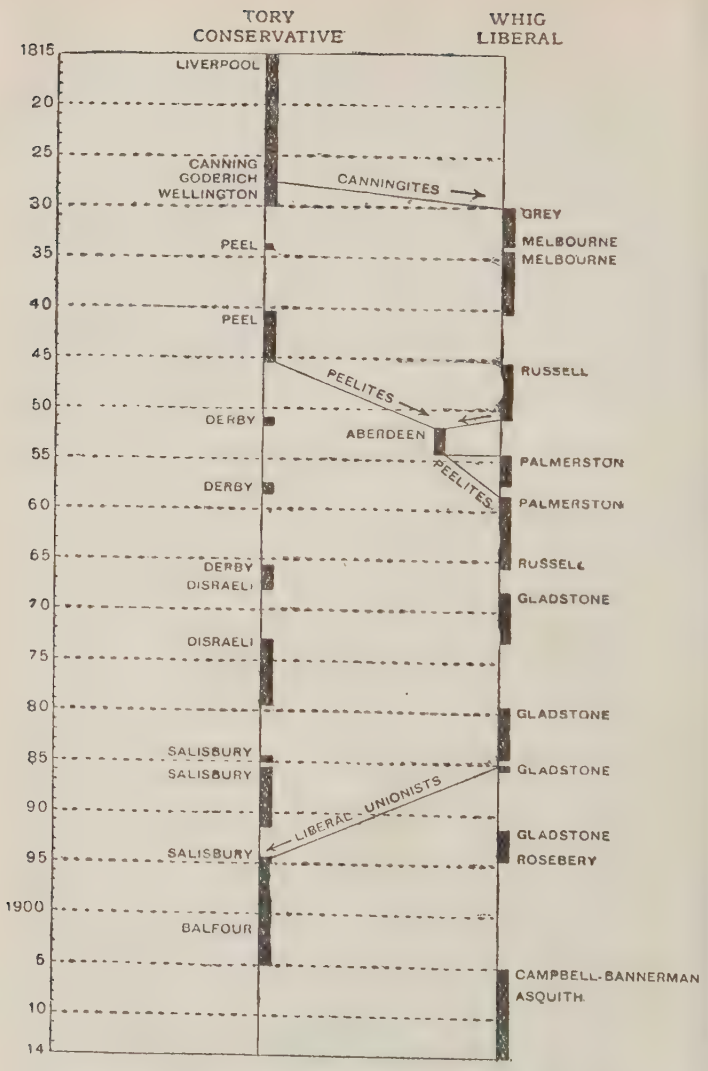


Diagram to illustrate the Ministries of the Nineteenth Century.

BOOK VII

THE GREAT WAR AND AFTER

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(ii) The Great Powers
(iii) From Crisis to Crisis
II. The War
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(iv) 1917
(v) 1918
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IV. Conclusion: written in 1928
Principal Dates

CHAPTER I

BEFORE THE WAR

(i) *Europe in the Nineteenth Century*

When Napoleon had been taken to St. Helena and the rulers he had defeated and dispossessed restored to their ancient dominions by the treaties of 1814 and 1815, a great epoch of history seemed to be over and done with. None the less, its consequences remained—consequences which the victorious Allies could not undo and would be unable to ignore. Chief among those consequences was the state of mind we call nationalism. The French Revolution had preached democracy, and revolutionary France had conquered its neighbours, thereby spreading the gospel of the revolution. Yet this very fact involved a certain contradiction of ideas. If the Sovereignty of the French People was entitled to prevail against kings and princes in France, was not the Sovereignty of the German People, for example, entitled to prevail against a French conqueror? And so Napoleon is at last overwhelmed by the weight and persistence of outraged nationalities, in Spain, in Russia, in Germany. Yet the statesmen who made the Treaties of Paris and Vienna were not concerned with nationalities: they thought in terms, not of peoples but of princes. Before the French Revolution, Germany and Italy had been divided into small fragments, ruled by different dynasties, and these dynasties were now restored.

Nationalism

For a whole generation the non-national settlement of 1815 stood practically intact, for the ideal of nationalism, the idea that each nation should form a single united and independent state, had hardly extended beyond the middle classes. In Germany its stronghold was in the universities, and in Italy among the disciples of the political philosopher

Mazzini. In 1848, however, there was a great explosion of nationalist revolutions, in Italy, in Germany, and in the Austrian Empire. In Italy and Germany the aim of the revolutionists was to unite many small states in one: in the Austrian Empire, different nationalities, Magyars (Hungarians) and Czechs, struggled to break up a non-national empire and secure home rule or independence. All these revolutions failed, but their very failure was an immense advertisement of nationalism. Success was almost bound to follow.

In 1859–60 the great Italian statesman Cavour, supported by Napoleon III, secured the union of nearly all Italy under the rule of Victor Emmanuel of Piedmont; his work was completed within the next ten years, when Austria was compelled to give up Venice and the Pope to abandon his "Temporal Estates." Between 1864 and 1871 Bismarck secured the union of all Germany in an empire ruled by the king of Prussia. In 1867 Déak, the Magyar statesman, compelled the Austrian Emperor to divide his dominions in two. Henceforth there was a Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary; the two halves shared an Emperor and a Chancellor (who conducted foreign policy) and an army, but were otherwise independently governed. In 1875–78 a great convulsion in the Balkan Peninsula showed that the gospel of nationalism had reached peoples who had never set eyes upon the armies of Napoleon. Russia backed the Serbs and Bulgars in their insurrection against Turkish rule, and the result was the creation of Bulgaria and the enlargement of Serbia (which had existed as a very small kingdom since about 1815).

1859–1878

Mazzini had held that, if only Europe could be organised in national states, international rivalries and wars would become a thing of the past. Never did an enthusiastic prophet make a greater mistake. One cause of trouble is that the nations are all intermingled along their frontiers. Where, for example, ought the frontier to lie between Austria and Italy, between Germany and Poland to-day? Germans will take one view, Poles another;

Nationalist rivalries

impartial opinion will perhaps dismiss the German view as unfair to the Poles and the Polish view as unfair to the Germans, but will be genuinely puzzled as to what its own view should be.

In any case the stage at which Europe had arrived by 1878 showed that while some national aspirations had been gratified, others had been defied or ignored. Germany, while securing her national union, had taken Alsace and Lorraine from France in defiance of the wishes of the inhabitants, and, at her other extremity, ruled three million Poles, whose kingdom had been suppressed at the time of the French Revolution. The Magyars, though they had secured independence of the Austrian Emperor, practically denied all political rights to the Serbs (or Jugo-Slavs) who lived in the southern parts of Hungary. Many Serbs and Bulgars still suffered oppression at the hands of the Turk in Macedonia, but Serbia and Bulgaria were unable to agree as to which of them should have the province or how it should be divided.

The expansion of European policy

From about 1880 onwards a new factor entered into the European situation. Hitherto the conflicts of the Great Powers of the nineteenth century had been concerned with purely European questions. Russian expansion in Asia and British expansion in every continent had scarcely interested the other European Powers, though Russia and Britain had come into unfriendly contact with one another on the frontier of India. But now France, Germany and Italy began to enter the field of imperial competition—all the Great Powers, in fact, except Austria-Hungary. European history resumed something of the character it had borne in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when wars between Britain and Spain, Holland and France were occasioned by imperial ambitions in Asia and America. This new characteristic of European rivalries became more and more conspicuous down to the Great War. The causes of the change were many, but the most important was the ever-increasing development of industry, which, not content with feeding home markets,

sought "surplus" markets in "undeveloped" countries. France, Germany and Italy became rivals for territory in Africa; Britain, Russia and Germany pursued rival policies in China; Germany sought to secure economic control of the whole Turkish Empire, and German companies began to construct a system of railways which would ultimately extend from the Bosporus to the Persian Gulf.

So long as Bismarck ruled in Germany his influence was paramount in Europe. He had secured alliances both with Austria and with Italy. This Triple Alliance constituted a solid block of power in Central Europe. The three outlying Powers, on the other hand, Great Britain, France and Russia, stood each alone. Great Britain was on bad terms with both France and Russia, and the despotic Tsar had no sympathy with the radical French Republic. Bismarck was dismissed in 1890, and at once the situation began to change. France and Russia, both threatened by Germany, signed their Dual Alliance in 1893. Eleven years later, as we have shown on an earlier page (p. 525), Great Britain made her Entente Treaty with France, followed by her Entente Treaty with Russia. Italy, meanwhile, had made arrangements which separated her in all but name from the Triple Alliance. By 1907 the grouping of the Powers of the Great War was already apparent.

The new grouping of the Powers

We have now to traverse the fatal years that lie between the making of the Ententes and the outbreak of the war. But before we enter on the story, it may be well to describe the characters of the six great actors in it.

(ii) *The Great Powers*

The German Empire contained in 1905 a population of just over sixty millions, and it was rapidly increasing. It had, in fact, increased fifty per cent. since 1870. Moreover German industry and wealth were increasing faster than population. Coal is a good measure of prosperity, and the German output of coal

The German Empire

multiplied by more than six between 1871 and 1913. Between 1850 and 1890, four million Germans had emigrated to the United States; since 1890 that emigration had dwindled to a mere trickle, because, though the growth of population was unabated, German industry could now find occupation for the increasing population at home. In the last fifteen years of the nineteenth century Germany had acquired four protectorates in Africa, the district of Kiao-Chau in China, and some territory in New Guinea and Samoa. In the early part of the twentieth century the German government was supporting and controlling the building of the Baghdad Railway, which would eventually connect the Bosphorus with the Persian Gulf. Her ambassador at Constantinople enjoyed much the same authority in Turkey as the British ambassador had enjoyed there in the period before the Crimean War.

The German government exercised an immense influence over the teaching profession in the State universities and schools, and Germans were taught from their youth upwards to attribute the whole of the prosperity they enjoyed to the Imperial system, the rule of the Prussian House of Hohenzollern, and the German army. Far back in the period of the Napoleonic wars, Scharnhorst had hit upon the modern Continental system of conscription—universal compulsory service for a short period (two or three years), followed by relegation to a vast Reserve, which could be immediately mobilised for war. This was the system which, under the re-organisation of Roon, had given Bismarck his crushing victories, and after 1870 it was adopted in principle by all the Continental Powers. So long as Bismarck was Chancellor (till 1890), he had been able, by his great ability and prestige, to control the constitution he had established. His successors, however, found themselves occupants of a most unstable position. The vainglorious Kaiser preferred soldiers to statesmen, and it was often soldiers, or Tirpitz, the naval minister, who really controlled the policy of the Empire. This was the very essence of

militarism—the soldier acting as the master instead of the servant of the statesman.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that all Germans were satisfied with their government. Germany had a democratically elected parliament, the *Reichstag*, and though its powers were limited, its periodic elections provided a barometer of public opinion. Bismarck had assumed that the German democracy, dazzled by military success, and rendered docile by State education, would accept whatever the military ruling class chose to give them. But he was mistaken. The tendencies of the age were all towards self-government and against hereditary despotism, and the Germans, being among the most intelligent of peoples, would not remain unaffected by those tendencies. It is true that the governing class and the State schools achieved an extraordinary degree of success in resisting the democratic tendency, but their success was not as complete as foreign opinion assumed. The opposition to Bismarck's system was voiced by the Social Democratic party (which roughly corresponded to our own semi-socialist Labour party). The Social Democratic vote tended steadily to increase. In the elections of 1912 they polled one-third of the voters. In fact before 1914 the prestige of the Hohenzollerns and all they stood for had passed its zenith and was entering on its decline. In transferring the old Prussian despotism, thinly disguised, to the new German Empire, Bismarck had set up an anachronism. This anachronism could only maintain itself by proving the necessity of its existence, and the only convincing proof was Bismarck's proof—war and victory. No doubt war, for the Prussian monarchy of 1914, was a gamble—" world-power or downfall." But " no war " was not a gamble; it was downfall to a certainty. Sooner or later, the Hohenzollerns were bound to go the way of the English Stuarts, unless they could prove their title by the sword.

It is plain, therefore, that the unfortunate Kaiser Wilhelm II was the victim as well as the villain of the piece. His theatrical military gestures, his restless craving for a

sensational popularity, were almost as much the product of his position as of his character.

Within the German Empire were three million Poles and two million inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine. All the former and more than half the latter were permanently hostile to German rule. But their opposition was a less important factor than the growth of Social Democracy among the Germans themselves.

The Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary consisted of two States, each with its own "home rule," combined under a single Hapsburg Emperor, Francis Joseph, with a common army and a common foreign policy. Austria-Hungary The population in 1910 was forty-nine millions and was fairly rapidly increasing. But this population was of the most varied character, for Austria-Hungary was a survival from a non-nationalistic age. Roughly speaking, there were in Austria nine million Germans, six million Czechs and Slovaks, four million Poles, three million Russians, two million Serbs,[1] and one million Italians. In Hungary there were nine million Magyars (Hungarians), two million Germans, two million Slovaks, three million Roumanians, four million Serbs.[1] In Bosnia, an Austrian protectorate, formally annexed in 1908, there were two million Serbs.[1] Within Austria the non-German peoples had, ever since 1880, been given increasing freedom of development; but in Hungary the Magyars maintained a racial despotism of the most aggressive character.

The Austrian army contained the same diversity of races as the Austrian Empire. Perhaps half of its recruits were drawn from peoples who, at the end of the war, seized the first opportunity of declaring their independence. It was not a very good army; but the fact of its survival through four years of warfare is an astonishing testimonial to the power of military discipline.

The danger point in this "ramshackle empire" was the Serbian problem. As far back as 1848 the Serb Jellacic

[1] Including under this term the closely allied peoples called Croats and Slovenes. All these three are now "Jugo-Slavs."

had helped to restore the Hapsburg monarchy and defeat Hungarian "home rule," because Hungarian home rule meant oppression for the Serbs. In 1867 the *Ausgleich* (treaty establishing the Dual monarchy) had secured the result which Jellacic prevented in 1848. South of the Danube was the kingdom of Serbia, with nearly three million more Serbs. This little kingdom had heroically struggled into existence, unnoticed by Europe in general, at about the time of Waterloo. It secured an increase of territory in 1878. It was to secure a much bigger increase of territory in the Balkan wars of 1912–1913. Its ambition was to follow the example of Italy, expel Austro-Hungarian rule from the territories of the ideal Serbia, and embrace them in a great "Jugo-Slavic" kingdom. To this the Magyar answer was, that there would be no peace until the Serb kingdom was destroyed, its dynasty deposed, and its territories annexed to the Hapsburg Empire. There were some, however, who, while agreeing with the Magyars as to the fate of the kingdom of Serbia, did not agree with them as to the ultimate destiny of the Serb peoples. These politicians held that eight or ten million Serbs could not be held down for ever; that the *Ausgleich* must be revised, and the Empire made a "Triple Monarchy." Perhaps they would have gone further and established some kind of "home rule all round" under Hapsburg rule. One of the leading advocates of this view was the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Hapsburg throne. He was, consequently, as much detested by the Magyar aristocracy as by the adherents of the Serbian government.

The Serb Problem.

The Hapsburg Empire has now vanished from the map: in fact the modern map roughly indicates not the old Empire but its racial divisions. None the less, the Empire served a useful purpose, for there are other elements in life besides nationality. There is trade, and the Hapsburg Empire was a vast area of free commercial intercourse. We may give it a geographical justification and call it Danubia —Danubia with an outlet on the Adriatic. There is no "Danubia" to-day, and the loss has to be set against the gain.

Italy had in 1911 a rapidly growing population of thirty-five millions. In fact, as she had no coal or iron, she was the most over-populated country in Europe, and large numbers of her population migrated elsewhere to earn their livings, either seasonally to France, or for a period of years to America; but the Italian does not like to settle permanently in a new country, it seems. Italy coveted Trieste and the Dalmatian coast, and also the Trentino—*i.e.* the upper valley of the Adige, and she had a fair claim on nationalist grounds to these territories. At present, however, the conquest of "unredeemed Italy" seemed a no more practical proposition than the French aspiration after Alsace and Lorraine. Italy was looking for colonies. She had let France get Tunis in 1882: she had involved herself in disaster when attacking Abyssinia in 1896. In 1911 she was to rob Turkey of the barren province of Tripoli, and a group of Ægean islands inhabited by Greeks and coveted by Greece. Italy had a parliamentary system modelled on that of England, but her politicians were corrupt and her electorate apathetic. As we have said, she was the one Great Power of Europe with friends in both camps and an effective connection with neither.

Italy

The Russian Empire, stretching from Warsaw, the capital of Poland, to Vladivostock, opposite Japan, was, of course, far larger than all Western Europe taken together, and had a population of about a hundred and seventy millions. Russia had in name the same system of universal military service as Germany, and this, with her population, would have given her an army more than twice as large. Actually, however, the man-power of the two armies was about the same, but the Russian army was markedly inferior in quality and very deficient in artillery. It also took far longer to mobilise anything like its full strength. After the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, an ambitious scheme of army reform was taken in hand, and it was calculated that the Russian army would attain its maximum efficiency in 1917. This was a very important factor in the European situation; it was plain to the rulers

Russia

of Germany that the longer the "inevitable" war was postponed, the more formidable would the striking power of Russia become. Nothing, however, could make the Russian army the equal of a German, French or British army of equal dimensions. The Russian generals might be skilful and the rank and file brave, but an illiterate nation, such as Russia was, could not produce the thousands of intelligent subalterns and non-commissioned officers on which the fighting efficiency of an army must depend.

As a result of the revolutionary risings of 1905, the Tsar had established a parliament called the Douma, but it enjoyed little power and showed little intelligence. The Tsar Nicholas II and his wife were well-meaning but very weak and foolish. The weakness of the Tsar was amazingly illustrated in 1905, when the Kaiser paid him a surprise visit, and induced him to sign an alliance with Germany, in which each Empire undertook to assist the other against any antagonist. When the Tsar's ministers discovered it, they had to point out to him that this treaty was in flat contradiction with his treaty with France; it was thereupon disavowed. The Tsaritsa came, in later years, completely under the influence of an unscrupulous and immoral adventurer named Rasputin, who did untold harm to the reputation of the Tsardom.

In 1907 Russia signed an "Entente" treaty with Great Britain, but the friendship was not an easy one to maintain. In spite of the treaty, Russian aggression continued in Persia, and there seems no doubt that in the years immediately before the war Russian ambitions, foiled by Japan in the Far East, were turning again towards Constantinople.

France had in 1906 a population of thirty-nine millions, and, unlike that of all other Great Powers, it was practically stationary. When one remembers that, in completely militarised States, the size of the army is exactly proportionate to the population, it is plain that this was, for French statesmen, an ominous fact. For this reason, France took all the greater interest in her North

France

African Empire, and aimed at its extension; for the North African peoples made excellent troops under French officers, and the African army corps were an integral part of the French army. The main purpose of the Anglo-French Entente, from the French point of view, was to enable France to occupy Morocco, while British backing prevented German interference. The quest of Morocco had become, in fact, a kind of consolation prize for the loss of Alsace and Lorraine. If ever there was a war with Germany, France would certainly claim the lost provinces, but she was in no mood to seek such a war.

The Third Republic had become an accepted institution, but it excited little enthusiasm. French ministries were weak and brief, and many of them engaged in conflicts with the Catholic Church, to which many of the military leaders of the nation were devoted. The war, when it came, showed that European opinion in general had exaggerated the efficiency of the French and underrated the efficiency of the German Army.

Great Britain had no European ambitions. Alone of the Great Powers we could have no conceivable motive for desiring a war. From the end of 1905 onwards, the Liberal party, inheriting from Gladstone intensely pacific traditions, was in power. In the years immediately before the war it would be true to say that most English people paid much more attention to the conflict between Lords and Commons and the prospect of an Irish rebellion than to anything that was happening in Europe. Acute European crises, coming about once every three years, were unwelcome and imperfectly understood interruptions; probably most people regarded the danger of a European war as very much exaggerated. After all, Russia had been "the enemy" for seventy years, and we had only fought her once, and then unnecessarily! None the less, the growing German navy, announced in 1900, and given an extended programme in 1907, was a menace that could not be ignored, and from 1909 onwards it was squarely faced. We determined to maintain a superiority of at least

Great Britain

8 : 5 over the German navy, and the highest skill and energy were concentrated upon every kind of technical improvement. At the same time the army was re-organised (Haldane's army reforms, 1907), and an "expeditionary force" of 150,000 provided for immediate transportation to the Continent. The French considered that, thus reinforced, they would be able to hold the German army on their frontier even if Germany violated the neutrality of Belgium. Lord Roberts advocated the introduction of conscription, but the proposal was outside practical politics, and was rejected by the Conservatives as well as the Liberals; the electorate would not have tolerated it. Moreover, most of our leading professional soldiers were against it. It would have involved a change so fundamental that efficiency would inevitably be diminished, even though it were afterwards increased; and Germany, if she intended war, would choose an occasion before the increase of efficiency had set in.

From the end of 1905 till the middle of the war, our foreign policy was in the hands of Sir Edward Grey, the only Foreign Secretary to hold the office for a longer consecutive period than Lord Castlereagh a hundred years before. It would be hard to find two men to whom the national honour could have been more safely entrusted. Both were, in the deepest sense of the word, English gentlemen, men to whom trickery and the baser wiles of diplomacy were abhorrent. Both were optimists, with more faith in the good sense and wisdom of "Europe" than the facts warranted. Castlereagh's hopes of Congressional control had been wrecked by the despotic aggressiveness of Russia and Austria. Grey, after solving more than one problem by Conference methods, was thwarted in the summer of 1914 by Germany's determination to back Austria in an unrighteous cause. But his failure was not final; for Grey played an important part in kindling in the mind of President Wilson the determination to establish a League of Nations.[1]

[1] See page 630.

(iii) *From Crisis to Crisis* (1905–1914)

As soon as the Anglo-French Entente had been made, Germany decided to test it. The Kaiser was sent by his ministers to Tangier in Morocco, where he made a speech proclaiming his recognition of the "absolute freedom" of the Sultan of Morocco, and the equality of the traders of all nations, "without monopoly or annexation," within his territories. Bülow, the German Chancellor, at once demanded a European Conference on Morocco. Delcassé, the great French Foreign Minister who had made the Entente, wanted to refuse, and was compelled by his colleagues to resign. The Conference met in 1906 at Algeciras, near Gibraltar. We need not state the complicated arrangements that were made. The important point is that the French claims were backed by Russia, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, and the United States, and Germany was compelled to give way. From this date onwards the Germans persuaded themselves that King Edward VII was engaged on a nefarious scheme of "encirclement," the purpose of which was to leave Germany without a friend in Europe. The result of the Tangier coup had, in fact, been to bind England and France much more closely together than before. From this period date the "military conversations" whereby the chiefs of the two armies made arrangements for joint action in case their governments should be allies in war. It was, however, explicitly understood and set down in writing that these "conversations" in no way affected the freedom of the two governments. There was no Anglo-French Alliance until after the Great War had begun.

The First Morocco Crisis

Two years later (1908–1909) there was a more formidable crisis in the Balkan area. Turkey, under the pernicious but feeble tyranny of Sultan Abdul Hamid, had long been going from bad to worse. Anarchy reigned in Macedonia, inhabited by a mixed population of Greeks, Serbs and Bulgars—so mixed, in fact, that, if the province was taken from the Turk, the Christian Balkan

The Young Turks

states would be certain to fight one another for it. Aehrenthal, the aggressive Chancellor of Austria-Hungary, had plans for a railway which would connect Austria with the port of Salonika. Russia's Entente with Great Britain was supposed to be strengthening Russia's hands for grasping at Constantinople. In these circumstances, a group of Turkish soldiers, generally known as the Young Turks, organised a revolution, overthrew Abdul Hamid, and seized the reins of Turkish government. They posed as "liberals," but were to prove themselves more ruthless in butchery of Christians than Abdul Hamid himself.

Thereupon Aehrenthal, with German support, announced the Austrian annexation of Bosnia, and prompted Ferdinand of Bulgaria to proclaim himself "Tsar" of that country. Both of these changes were little more than nominal, for Austria had ruled Bosnia as a "protectorate," and Bulgaria had enjoyed practical independence ever since the Treaty of Berlin in 1878; nevertheless, names, in spite of what Shakespeare says to the contrary, may be important. The announcement was a breach of the Berlin treaty and a snub to Serbia and to Russia. Russia was unprepared, France was uninterested, and Great Britain could do nothing without them. The Kaiser boasted that he had stood by his ally "in shining armour." He had avenged Algeciras. Serbia was maddened, and from this date onwards Serbian plots for the assassination of Austrian officials in Bosnia were of annual occurrence.

The Bosnian Annexation

In 1911 Morocco again. The Sultan of that country, finding himself unable to keep order, asked for and obtained the despatch of a French force to his capital, Fez. Germany despatched a gun-boat, the *Panther*, to Agadir, on the Atlantic coast of Morocco, and demanded that, as the Algeciras settlement had broken down, France should cede to Germany part of her Congo territory, in return for which Germany would allow France a free hand in Morocco; she also demanded that the negotiations should be between France and Germany alone, *i.e.* that

The Second Morocco Crisis

Great Britain should be excluded from them. Mr. Lloyd George made, with Sir Edward Grey's approval, a defiant speech, in which he said that Britain could not allow herself to be treated as "of no account in the Cabinet of Nations." Germany secured her strip of the French Congo, but Morocco became a French protectorate, and there was a general feeling in Germany that the Kaiser had made a false move and humiliated his country. This interpretation of the crisis in Germany was perhaps its most serious feature. Never again could the Kaiser afford to draw back.

At this date and onwards until the very outbreak of the war, Germany was engaged in attempting to settle scores with Great Britain, with a view to keeping us out of the war, if and when it came. The first overture was the proposal of a treaty of neutrality: if an attack was made upon either Great Britain or Germany by a third Power, the Power not attacked was to remain neutral. This offer could not be accepted; it would have bound us without in any way binding Germany. For Germany might be involved in war with either France or Russia, but it was extremely improbable that either Austria or Italy (much less France or Russia) would involve themselves in war with us. Our only fear was from Germany. Then followed proposals for an amicable agreement about the Baghdad railway and its terminus on the Persian Gulf. Here Sir Edward Grey was very ready to negotiate, and it is one of the ironies of history that an Entente treaty for the settlement of this question was ready for signature on the very eve of the Great War.

Anglo-German Negotiations

In October 1912, the Balkan League of Serbia, Montenegro,[1] Bulgaria and Greece, united for the moment by the ingenious diplomacy of the Greek minister, Venizelos, declared war upon Turkey, and, by a series of astonishing victories, carried all before them. Practically all European Turkey, except Constan-

The Balkan League

[1] Montenegro was a small Serb kingdom separate from Serbia. To-day it is part of Jugo-Slavia.

tinople and a few isolated fortresses, was occupied by the victorious armies. The Great Powers were aghast, and England and Germany combined to work for a peaceful settlement by Conference. The danger point was Albania, (then a Turkish province), from which both Italy and Austria were determined to exclude the Serbs. Italy objected to Serbia on the Adriatic, and Austria objected to Serbian success in any form, but probably realised that the exclusion of Serbia from Albania would drive the Serbs to poach upon territories that ought to go to Bulgaria, and thus break up the Balkan League. Germany's motive in backing Austria is obvious; Sir Edward Grey's is less so. Some say that he did not understand the Albanian question, but it is probable that he supported the Austrian policy as the only one on which the Great Powers could be got to agree.

The result was disastrous to the League. Serbia, excluded from Albania, demanded what was by rights Bulgar territory. Greece backed Serbia, and both made war on the luckless Bulgars. Roumania joined the Allies and stabbed Bulgaria in the back; Turkey recovered Adrianople. The result was the Treaty of Bucharest (1913). The spoils were shared out, and Bulgaria got much less than she deserved. One thing was quite certain: the Treaty of Bucharest would be torn up as soon as any one of the parties to it believed that it would pay to do so.

The position was now as follows. Serbia had gained a great increase of territory, though not the territory to which she had the best claim. Pan-Serbian agitation among the eight million Serbs in the Austrian Empire redoubled. Bulgaria had the best reasons for hating Serbia, and so became friendly to Austria. Turkey obtained a German general, Liman von Sanders, to reorganise her army. Serbia, isolated in the Balkans (apart from Greece, which was very unstable—the King pulling one way and Venizelos another), looked to Russia, and Russia willingly undertook to be her patron. In Austria, Aehrenthal was dead, but Berchtold, his

The Sarajevo Murder

successor, Tisza, Prime Minister of Hungary, and the Archduke Francis Ferdinand were laying their plans to end an intolerable situation by destroying the kingdom of Serbia. Then came, on 28th June, the murder of the Archduke by a Serb fanatic in the streets of the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo. It provided the pretext for an Austro-Serbian war such as was already under contemplation.

It seems probable that certain highly placed Serbian officials knew of the assassination plot, but that the government as a whole did not. Austria assumed, without evidence, that the Serbian government was guilty, and secured the backing of the German government. On 23rd July an ultimatum was despatched which Serbia could hardly accept, for it practically demanded the surrender of her independence. The Serbian reply of 25th July went to the extreme limit of possible concession. Grey now urged Germany to restrain her ally, and it appears that Germany made an attempt to do so. Austria, however, declared war on Serbia on 28th July. Russia began partial mobilisation on the 29th and full mobilisation on the 30th. On the night of the 31st, Germany sent ultimatums to Russia, demanding the stoppage of her mobilisation, and to France, demanding neutrality; on 1st August, Germany ordered her own mobilisation, and declared war on Russia. France ordered her mobilisation on the same day, and Germany declared war on France on 3rd August.

The Thirteen Days

The British fleet had been holding manœuvres, and its normal dispersal was countermanded on 26th July. On the same day Grey proposed a Conference of the four Powers not directly concerned in the Balkans problem—Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy. Germany refused, as she would be in a minority in such a Conference. On the night of the 31st, Great Britain asked both France and Germany for a guarantee of Belgian neutrality. France accepted and Germany gave an ambiguous answer; she asked if we would remain neutral if she gave the pledge, and Grey said he could give no such promise. On 2nd August, the British Government undertook to defend the

French coast with the British navy if the German navy attempted to enter the Channel. On the evening of the 3rd, Grey made a statement in the House of Commons, and it was clear that the House would support the government if it went to war on the question of Belgian neutrality. On the 4th, Belgian territory being already violated, Grey sent an ultimatum, which meant that war began at midnight unless Germany had definitely undertaken to leave Belgium alone. British statesmen had withheld their decision until the issue was absolutely clear. When the issue was clear and the decision made, the nation accepted it with a unanimity that had seemed impossible only a few days before.

Such was the history of the famous "Thirteen Days" (23rd July to 4th August). We have set it out as briefly as possible, and it explains itself. Europe was so constructed that a declaration of war by any member of either of the great Alliances involved the other members of both of them, and Great Britain came in on the Belgian issue. It seems probable that our action in undertaking the protection of the French coast would have involved us in the war almost at once even if Belgium had not been invaded.

A few general questions demand consideration before we leave the subject of this chapter.

Was Germany, as is sometimes asserted, the sole cause of the war? It is obvious that the war arose out of a conflict between Austria and Serbia, and that that conflict was caused less by the Hapsburg monarchy itself than by the aggressive tyranny of the Magyars in Hungary. This quarrel was, in fact, a conflict between rival "nationalisms," like the conflicts which distract so many areas of Europe to-day. But such a war would not have become a general war unless Germany had backed Austria against Serbia and Russia; and Germany backed Austria because her ambitions demanded a continuous and unbroken sphere of influence through Austria and the Balkans and Turkey "from Berlin to Baghdad." Germany again had, since 1870, set the fashion and set the

Was Germany alone Guilty?

pace in the matter of competitive armaments. Yet it would be possible to trace the ancestry of the war further back. Conscription was first forced on Prussia when she was the victim of a foreign conqueror, and the first man to prove to all the world the immense powers of organised militarism of the modern type was not a German: his name was Napoleon. In 1832 a German named Clausewitz had published a book which has ever since been accepted as the "Bible" of militarism, much as Marx's *Capital* has been accepted as the "Bible" of Communism. But Clausewitz professed to be doing no more than setting out the lessons to be derived from Napoleon's career.

Was Great Britain wise in making Ententes with France and Russia? We generally assume that she was, yet a case can be stated against the policy. By "backing" France and Russia, we certainly emboldened France to undertake an aggressive policy in Morocco, and Russia to intervene more actively in the Balkans. Their actions provoked Germany and Austria, and enabled the German government to inflame the German people with the idea that we were seeking to "encircle" them. Also the Ententes meant that we lost our position as the one remaining "neutral" among the Great Powers (for Italy hardly counted). This was a real misfortune, for if there are no neutrals, the "jury system" of a European Conference becomes a farce: votes can be counted before the evidence is heard. Sir Edward Grey did his very best to combine loyalty towards our European friends with impartiality in his judgment of European problems. We may hold that he succeeded, but it was inevitable that his "loyalty" should prejudice his reputation for "impartiality." Thus the establishment of the Ententes was in a sense an evil. But it was the lesser of two evils. If we had not backed France and Russia, Germany would have secured, before 1914, the practical control of the Continent.

Criticism of British Policy

Ought we, on the other hand, to have gone further than we did, and made alliances with France and Russia? Ought we to have undertaken that, if Germany went to war with

France or Russia, we automatically and by previous agreement declared war on Germany? Some French and Russian statesmen held at the time, and have since maintained, that if we had made such alliances, Germany would not have dared to provoke the war. That raises the question, did Germany in fact assume that we should join in the war, or was she taken by surprise? If she assumed that we would join, then this Franco-Russian suggestion is refuted. The answer seems to be—as one might expect—that German opinion was divided, and that the German public in general was genuinely surprised: hence their intense outburst of hatred against us. But the most important military chiefs assumed that we should enter the war, and that our entry would make no difference to the result. They observed that we were on the verge of a civil war in Ireland; they remembered and exaggerated our military incompetence in South Africa; they knew that our expeditionary force was, by Continental standards, minute; they reckoned, rightly, that the French would be unprepared for an invasion through Belgium; and they gambled upon getting the war over before we could mobilise our civilian population.

It seems, then, that alliances with France and Russia would have served no useful purpose. It is quite certain that no British government could in any case have made such alliances. The nation would never have permitted it. The division of Europe into devils and angels was an inevitable legend once the war had begun; but such a legend had few adherents before August 1914. We were by no means prepared to back France and Russia in all conceivable circumstances against Germany. An alliance with France would have meant that we bound ourselves to engage in *any* war, whatever our opinion of the cause of it. Despotic monarchies can make such engagements and keep them; free countries, happily, will not and cannot do so. We remained free until the last moment, and when we declared war on Germany, it was not because we were bound by a bargain with France, but because we held that Germany was committing an international crime.

CHAPTER II

THE WAR

It is hardly necessary to say that the war that now opened was an altogether unprecedented revelation of human energy, human destructiveness and human endurance. The developments of politics and of science combined to make it unlike all previous wars. Conscription had made war a national, and no longer a specialised, activity: popular education made it a matter of universal interest. Scientific invention—as illustrated by the submarine, the aeroplane, and wireless telegraphy, all of them twentieth-century novelties, enabled the combatants to employ new methods. The mere size of the armies involved tactical problems such as had never been foreseen. The biggest battle hitherto fought in Europe was the Battle of Leipsic in 1813 : it lasted four days and involved half a million men. But the battles of the Western Front of 1914–1918 were reckoned by weeks and months; the Western Front was 400 miles long and its " population " of soldiers reached six or seven millions—the population of all England in Queen Anne's reign, or of London and most of its suburbs to-day. In a very real sense the whole warfare in that area was one single battle, since the armies, once in contact, were never again out of gunshot of one another. Naval warfare was transformed more strangely still. Encounters were reckoned not in weeks but minutes, and ships with crews of a thousand men could be sent to the bottom by a single shell fired at telescopic range or by the torpedo of an invisible submarine.

It is impossible in a brief text-book to give any idea of the day-to-day life of those who fought for their country, on land, on sea, or in the air. Many records of personal ex-

perience have been given to the public, and many novels record essential truth in the guise of fiction. This chapter can only supply a framework and an outline; it can only reveal the war as it would appear from a distance, where movements can be discerned as parts of a wider whole. But at such a distance the noise of the battle is not heard, nor is its anguish apparent. Yet it should not be forgotten.

In old days there was a season for war just as there is now for cricket, and when the time for campaigning was over, the armies went into "winter quarters." Progress long ago abolished this humane custom; there were no "winter quarters" for the soldiers in the sodden trenches of Flanders or on the frozen plains of Poland, nor for the sailors in the mine-sweepers of the North Sea. None the less, the winter weather imposed a restriction of activity even on modern warfare, and the natural divisions of the Great War are best indicated by the dates of the successive years.

(i) 1914

The German plan of campaign, which had been thought out long before, was to throw all the weight of their forces against France and smash her with a sudden blow, and only afterwards to turn and rend Russia. Perhaps this was Germany's first fatal mistake. Suppose she had said in effect to France: "Our quarrel is with Russia. If you insist on joining in, well and good. We shall defend our frontiers against you." Russia would have been driven out of the war. France would have wasted her forces in vain against an impregnable German defence, and would have appeared the aggressor. Belgium would have been unviolated. Great Britain would (probably) have remained neutral until this stage was over. Germany would then have had France at her mercy; and then—?

The German Plan

The plan the Germans adopted involved the violation of Belgium. The Belgians were offered the most tempting terms; they had only to sit still and allow the German armies to cross their territories. To their eternal honour

they refused, and the first force to encounter the Germans was the garrison of Liége. The last fort of Liége fell on 15th August, and Namur fell, after much less resistance, on 23rd August. The old-fashioned "fortress" was proved to be obsolete. But the Belgian effort had delayed the German advance by a few days, and those few days made all the difference.

The French Retreat

In 1911, General Michel, who was then marked out to command the French armies in the event of war, concluded that the Germans would come through Belgium, and proposed to lay his plans in accordance with that assumption. The majority of the experts disagreed with him, and he resigned. Joffre was installed in his place, and the French campaign was planned on the opposite assumption. As soon as war broke out, the French invaded Alsace and Lorraine. These invasions were themselves unsuccessful, and they placed the French in the worst possible position for coping with the Germans on the Belgian frontier. French plans had to be entirely recast in the middle of August, but the notion still prevailed that "attack was the best defence," and French forces were hurled into Belgium to meet the enemy. What followed was the worst disaster of the war for France. Civilian opinion at the time inclined to measure that disaster "geographically"; it saw the French armies hurled back from Belgium to a line running east and west from Paris to Verdun. The geographical aspect was important, as will be shown, but it was less important than the loss of men. The French army (of about 1,300,000) lost between 21st August and 12th September over 600,000 men, and of these 330,000 were dead or prisoners—*i.e.* permanent loss. Of the wounded, probably five-sixths ultimately returned to the fighting line. The French losses were much greater than the German, whereas the later history of the war showed that, when attack and defence are equally well conducted, attackers, *i.e.* "advancers," lose twenty to fifty per cent. more than defenders, especially if the defenders retreat in time and do not attach a superstitious value to mere acres of ground.

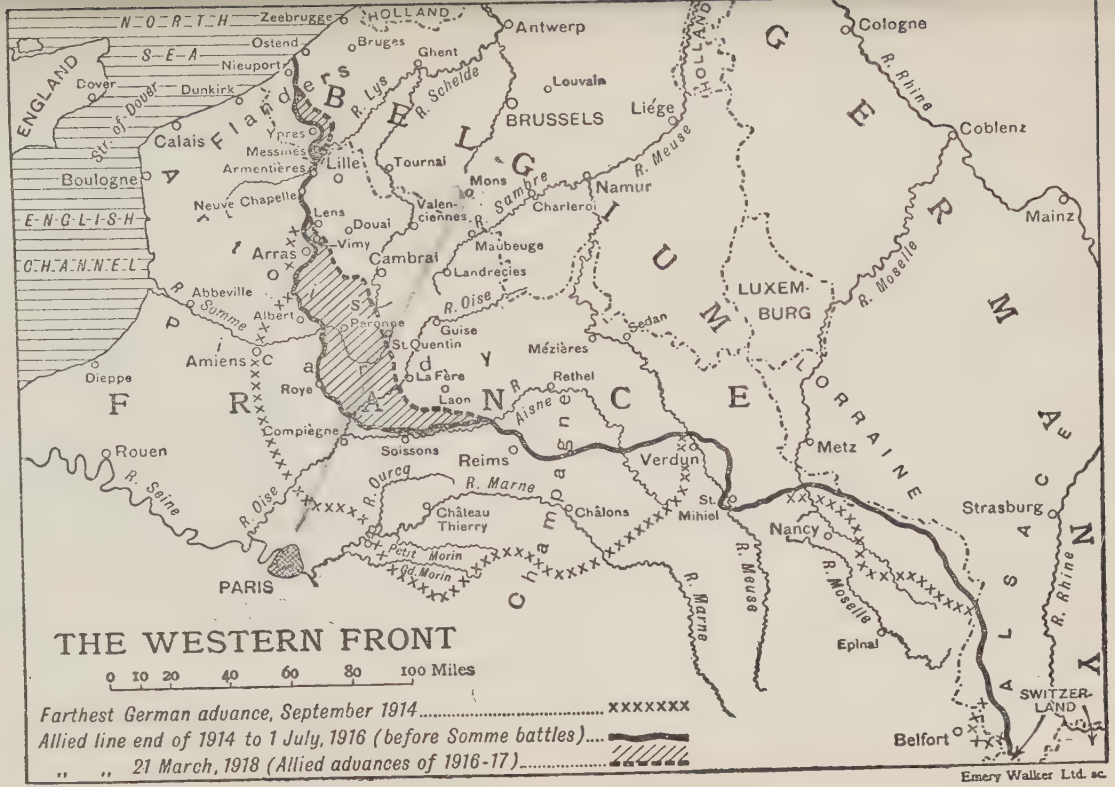
On the western side of this great retreat, the British Expeditionary Force played a part small in dimensions but absolutely decisive in quality. Admiral Tirpitz tells us in his Memoirs that the German navy were told not to interfere with the transport of that Force; the German General Staff preferred to get it over to France and to destroy it there. Of course the German navy would have failed to interfere even if it had tried; the British navy would have seen to that. Still, such were German orders, and they were a great mistake. For it seems quite likely that, if there had been no "Old Contemptibles,"[1] the French army would have been decisively and finally defeated. About 80,000 British encountered the Germans at Mons on 23rd August. Finding his right wing "in the air" owing to the French defeat, Sir John French ordered the retreat. It covered 120 miles in twelve days, and ended just east of Paris. A most notable rear-guard action was fought in the early stages of the retreat by Smith-Dorrien at Le Câteau.

The British Expeditionary Force

Between 6th and 13th September, the Allied armies, stretching from Paris to Verdun, fought the Battle of the Marne, which has been called the turning point of the war. It checked the tide of invasion. The Germans retreated about fifty miles to positions that, with really extraordinary forethought, considering that victory seemed within their grasp, they had prepared behind the river Aisne. So the Battle of the Aisne began. The Allies supposed that the Germans were merely fighting a rear-guard action, but they were to be disappointed. The German line held firm, and the only thing to do was to outflank it. So began a series of movements in which each side extended its lines to left and right, each seeking to overreach the other. Both failed, and the lines ultimately extended to the Belgian coast in the north-west and the Swiss frontier in the south-east. Thus was formed that famous Western Front on which, with minor oscillations, the soldiers of France, Britain and Germany were to live,

The Marne and the Aisne

[1] The Kaiser was reported to have publicly referred to "that contemptible little army." The report was untrue, but it fairly represented the German official attitude.


THE WESTERN FRONT
0 10 20 40 60 80 100 Miles
Farthest German advance, September 1914 xxxxxxx
Allied line end of 1914 to 1 July, 1916 (before Somme battles)....
" " 21 March, 1918 (Allied advances of 1916-17).....
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NORTH SEA
ENGLAND
Dover
Dunkirk
Str. of Dover
Calais
Boulogne
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Zeebrugge
Ostend
Nieuport
Bruges
HOLLAND
Antwerp
Ghent
Louvain
BRUSSELS
Liége
Flanders
Ypres
Messines
Armentières
Lille
Tournai
Mons
Namur
Charleroi
Neuve Chapelle
Lens
Douai
Vimy
Arras
Valenciennes
Maubeuge
Cambrai
Landrecies
Abbeville
Albert
Peronne
Guise
St. Quentin
Amiens
Dieppe
Roye
La Fère
Laon
Mézières
Sedan
Rethel
Compiègne
Soissons
Reims
Verdun
Rouen
Château Thierry
Châlons
St. Mihiel
Nancy
Metz
Epinal
Strasburg
Belfort
Cologne
Coblenz
Mainz
LUXEMBURG
LORRAINE
ALSACE
SWITZERLAND
PARIS
Petit Morin
Gd. Morin
R. Lys
R. Schelde
R. Sambre
R. Meuse
R. Rhine
R. Moselle
R. Oise
R. Somme
R. Seine
R. Ourcq
R. Marne
R. Aisne
Champagne
Artois
Picardy
BELGIUM
GERMANY
FRANCE

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and to die, for the next four years. Nothing perhaps brings back the war with such painful vividness to those of us who were fated to stay at home, as the sight of that too familiar line upon a map.

The Germans in Belgium

But for many weeks after the beginning of the Battle of the Aisne, the precise formation of that line was uncertain. The German aim was to press it "down" to Havre; the Allied aim was to press it "up" to Antwerp. Since the retreat from Mons the Belgian army, isolated from its Allies, had been holding Antwerp, which was reckoned one of the strongest fortresses in Europe. The Belgians in Antwerp were a distinct embarrassment on the German flank, and furnished the pretext for the many appalling crimes which the Germans perpetrated upon the civilian population of Belgium. We called these things "frightfulness," which was a loose translation of a German word really meaning "intimidation." Clausewitz, the German military theorist, had said that "intimidation" of civilian populations was a necessary part of war.

It is important to think calmly on this subject. Wars are between nations, and not merely between armies. The reason why young men, and not old men, women, and children, are sent out to fight is that they alone can fight, not because they alone are fit persons for death in war. War itself is a hideous wrong. But, granted there is war, there is no *further* wrong in all classes of the community bearing its labours and its risks. Perhaps it is best that they should. What brands the German conduct in Belgium was that most of it could not be justified by any pretext of "intimidation"; it did not in any way facilitate the German military effort. The destruction of the famous Library at Louvain and the outrageous brutality shown to the civil population sent a thrill of horror through the Allied countries, and certainly through some neutral countries as well. Here, as later in the introduction of poison gas and the use of submarines to sink unarmed merchant vessels, the Germans showed a cynical disregard for the moral standards slowly

and patiently established by the growth of European civilisation. These things did harm untold, and not least in the long run to the Germans themselves. The atrocities in Belgium provoked an intense feeling of indignation and disgust among the enemies of Germany, and those emotions, altogether wholesome in themselves, encouraged other less wholesome aspirations for mere vengeance—aspirations which found expression in parts of the Peace Treaties of 1919.

At the beginning of October the fall of Antwerp was imminent. It was delayed a few days by the sudden arrival of Mr. Churchill (First Lord of the Admiralty) with a small British force. This episode was much derided at the time, but it may be that, here again, a few days made all the difference. The delay of the German force in front of Antwerp may, it is argued, have enabled the Allies to extend beyond Dunkirk a line which might otherwise have failed to cover Calais. October was filled with the battles that stabilised the northern section of the Front:—the French battle, conducted by Foch, round Arras, the British battle of Ypres, and the battle fought by the Belgian army (escaped from Antwerp) along the Yser canal. Here were special features—the flooding of the fenlands by the cutting of dykes after the old Dutch pattern, and the powerful assistance of *Monitors*, flat-bottomed gunboats supplied by the British navy.

Ypres and the Yser

The Germans had not won the war, but they had secured what would enable them to prolong it: the great industrial area of Belgium, with a population which could be forced to serve their needs, half the coal-bearing country of Northern France, and the iron mines of Briey in French Lorraine. The loss of these things to France could only be made good in Great Britain and in America.

The war on the Eastern Front bore from first to last a very different character from that in the West. The area of combat was immensely larger, the armies were smaller and, except where Germans took a hand, inferior in quality. The Russians came into effective action quicker than their enemies had expected,

The Russian Offensives

and their invasion of East Prussia in August created something like a panic in Berlin. The Battle of Tannenberg (31st August) crushed this Russian offensive, and laid the foundations of the fame of Hindenburg and Ludendorff. None the less, the German High Command had felt itself obliged to withdraw troops from France, and Russia had certainly helped to save her hard-pressed allies. Further south, against the Austrians, Russian success was extremely impressive. Lemberg fell early in September, and practically the whole province of Galicia, which lies along the North of the Carpathians, was occupied by Russian armies. Its oilfields gave it an importance which might balance the loss of French coal and iron. And what next? To the south lay the wheat-fields of the Hungarian plain, and to the east the coal of Prussian Silesia. We in England had a faith in the might of Russia which seems pathetic in the light of after events. The "Russian steam-roller," some said, would reach Berlin by Christmas. In August there had been a widely believed rumour that a Russian army had landed in Scotland, and passed through England on its way to save the Western Front! It was not, of course, altogether pleasant that the two most civilised peoples of Europe should be rescued from the clutches of German militarism by the hordes of a semi-Oriental despotism, but we had hardly time to think of that.

Invaded by Russia, the Austrians had but little strength left to deal with Serbia, and their invasion of that country in November was gloriously repulsed. Turkey joined Germany at the beginning of the same month. This had been inevitable from the first, but it involved a host of fresh military and diplomatic problems. The Suez Canal had to be defended, and an army of Australian and New Zealand volunteers was halted in Egypt. An army from India sailed up the Persian Gulf and occupied Basra, the port of Mesopotamia, the south-eastern limit of the Turkish Empire. But what about the European end of the Turkish Empire—Constantinople? That raised the further problem of the conduct of the still neutral Balkan States. Greece had a pro-German King but a

The Turkish Empire

powerful pro-Ally Prime Minister, Venizelos, who wanted to join the Allies and secure a Greek empire in Asia Minor, and perhaps Constantinople as well; but the merest suggestion of that possibility might estrange Russia. Greece also could hardly move unless the neutrality of Bulgaria on the flank of her newly acquired (1913) province was secured, and Bulgaria was quite justifiably hoping to secure territory from Serbia, which Germany could promise her and we, as Serbia's ally, could not. Roumania had a Hohenzollern King, but her people longed to annex Transylvania, a province of Hungary with a large Roumanian population; they also, however, longed to annex Bessarabia, which had been taken from them by Russia in 1878. All these States would follow what they believed to be their own interests; in war-time the best diplomacy is victory, for it inclines neutrals to join the winning side.

The Command of the Seas

It is hard for a civilian to form a clear idea of land warfare under modern conditions, but far harder to understand the warfare of the seas. From the first day of the war to the last, the British navy commanded the seas. It defended these islands from invasion; protected the transport of millions of troops, not only from England, but from every quarter of the British Empire, to the battle fronts, and fed those troops with munitions and all their other requirements; it also protected the transport of millions of tons of every kind of goods to the civilian populations of the Allied countries. Nor was this all. The services which it rendered to the Allies it denied to the enemy, and the slow strangulation of the blockade was perhaps the fundamental cause of the defeat of the German armies. There were only two occasions after the Battle of the Marne when the war was nearly lost. One was the first period of the final German offensive of March 1918; but the other, less dramatic but really more formidable, was a year earlier, when the German submarines came near paralysing Allied commerce. And the Grand Fleet, on which all this depended, was hidden away to the north of Scotland! In modern naval warfare everything depends upon wireless.

The Admiralty was in daily and hourly communication with the Commander-in-Chief at Scapa Flow in the Orkneys. Moreover, the Admiralty was continuously "listening in" upon the enemy. Their orders were read in London before they could be carried out. Of this we knew nothing at the time. For example, an excellent English "History of the War," written in 1919, speaks of the British fleet being "accidentally" off Jutland on 31st May, 1916, "engaged in one of the periodical sweeps through the North Sea." Since that date we have been told the truth. The Grand Fleet was sent to meet the German fleet on evidence supplied by the "cryptographers' department" of the Admiralty.

We can follow the actions of the armies; they were horribly plain to all the world. But the "actions" of the navy, if by actions we mean fighting, were the merest fringe of its labours. The work of the navy may be compared with the appearance of a floating iceberg; only a fraction of it was visible. The great achievement of the navy was that it made possible the achievement of the army. The "actions" of the navy call for no more than brief mention in an outline like the present.

Naval Contests of 1914

When the war began, naval men confidently expected a great naval battle, and were immensely disappointed when the German Grand Fleet refused them an opportunity for a full trial of strength. In these circumstances a raid upon German waters by light cruisers, destroyers and submarines was the best substitute. This was brilliantly executed on 28th August, and is known as the Battle of Heligoland Bight. Meanwhile there was one German fleet on the high seas. Japan had joined the Allies, in accordance with her treaty with Great Britain, and would obviously attack the German station of Tsing-Tau in Kiao-Chau, so the German Admiral Von Spee made his escape with his seven vessels. Two made towards India, and one of these, the *Emden*, did much damage before her own destruction in November. The other five crossed the Pacific, destroyed our own Pacific squadron under Cradock at Coronel (1st November) off the coast of Chile, and were

themselves destroyed by a squadron sent from the Grand Fleet under Sturdee at the Falkland Islands on 8th December. Both battles revealed the inhuman deadliness of modern naval warfare. No bravery or skill could counterbalance superiority of speed and range of gunfire.

German Colonies

The German colonies were doomed to fall into our hands for the duration of the war, though a German victory in Europe would, of course, have secured their return and much more besides. Togoland and Cameroons were occupied at once. The conquest of German South-west Africa was postponed by a rebellion of the anti-British element among the South African Dutch. Botha and Smuts, themselves Dutchmen, extinguished the rebellion before the end of the year.

The "Home Front"

A history of Europe at war would be incomplete if it gave no account of those who neither fought nor directed the fighting. Yet every nation had its own experience on the "Home-Front," as it was sometimes rather absurdly called, and each different. We must limit ourselves to Great Britain. The Irish controversy, which had loomed so large a week before the war, was dropped; there was a truce between Dublin and Belfast. Lord Kitchener became Minister of War in the Asquith government, and issued an immediate appeal for recruits. He alone foresaw, it seems, that the war would be long: "three years or the duration of the war," was the term of service. The appeal received an overwhelming response, and there was at present no need for conscription. The need of the moment was not men but rifles : the need of far more artillery munitions than peace-time methods could supply was hardly appreciated as yet. Equally spontaneous and overwhelming was the response from the Dominions and the fighting races of India. The war proved the vitality of the British Empire as a great association of free peoples. Yet in 1914 we had as a nation no realisation of what a national war effort under modern conditions would mean. Patriotic business men took "business as usual" as their motto, and believed that those who could not fight ought

simply to carry on their peace-time activities. Long before the war was over business was to be far from "as usual"; it would be mobilised under the government in the service of the army and navy.

(ii) 1915

After the opening catastrophe of the German invasion, the events of 1914 had been not unfavourable to the Allies. The British navy had secured the seas, the French army had established a firm line of defence in France, and the Russian armies had overrun Galicia. Probably most people in England expected the war to end in victory before the close of 1915, and this forecast might perhaps have been very nearly fulfilled if wiser plans had been adopted and resolutely pursued. Instead, the Allies mismanaged their affairs and wasted their resources, and the year provided a record of heroic endeavour and tragic failure. It is easy to be wise after the event. War is the most difficult as well as the most hideous of human undertakings, and all wars are marked by gigantic blunders. We can record these blunders afterwards without setting ourselves up as wiser than those who committed them.

The Russian Collapse

At the beginning of 1915 the ordinary man expected great things to come from Russia; but the rulers of the nations already knew better. In the fighting of 1914 Russian armies had fired more ammunition each day than Russian factories had turned out each month. Their supply of manhood was well-nigh inexhaustible, but their army was already practically unarmed, and, with Turkey at war and holding the Straits at Constantinople, the Allies could only reach her by the most laborious and roundabout routes. The German plan for the year was obvious: to hold her line in the west, and to crush Russia. On 28th April the Germans, under Mackensen, launched an attack upon the Russians on the river Dunajec, about fifty miles east of Cracow. Thenceforward for five months the Russians were driven steadily back, out of Galicia and out of Poland, losing many hundreds of thousands

of killed, wounded and prisoners. In the autumn their front was stabilised on a line running north and south from Pinsk, three hundred miles east of the point where the battle began. Russia was not driven out of the war, and for two years more her armies detained on the Eastern Front large forces of the enemy. But it may be that the terrible experiences of the half-armed Russian soldiers in this campaign doomed the Tsardom and entailed the Revolution; for Russia is a vast, unorganised country, and effects follow causes there with a slowness inconceivable in Western Europe.

"Westerners" and "Easterners"

We return to the beginning of the year and consider the alternative policies open to the Allies. These may be called the Western and Eastern policies. Those who upheld the Western policy held that the war could only be decided at the point where the largest forces were engaged, namely the Western Front. They believed that all available energies must be concentrated on breaking, or forcing back the German line, and that such efforts were capable of success in 1915; and that any energies diverted to what were contemptuously called "side-shows" were energies wasted. In reply the supporters of the Eastern policy argued somewhat as follows. They said in effect: "Battles in the recent past have all been won by outflanking methods, and on the Western Front there are no flanks. Success in a frontal attack under existing conditions could only be achieved by enormous superiority of numbers, and our superiority of numbers in France is probably only about five to four. A Western offensive will fail, and will be more costly to us than to the enemy. Moreover, it is not true that the main theatre of war, *i.e.* the theatre with the largest numbers, is necessarily the decisive theatre: it was not so, for example, in the American Civil War. Sea power enables us to choose our point of attack, and we should choose a point, not where the enemy is strongest, but where he is most vulnerable, as the Germans themselves are doing, keeping in France only what, on the most prudent calculations, is necessary for defence."

Opinions perhaps still differ, but more and more

authorities seem now to conclude that the "Easterners" were right and the "Westerners" wrong. But the Western view had the unanimous support of the French Government, soldiers, and nation. Their minds were passionately concentrated—and who shall blame them?—on getting the Germans out of France, to the exclusion of all other considerations. They were supported by most of the English military chiefs. The principal supporters of the Eastern view were English statesmen, and in particular Mr. Churchill. The Western view carried the day. A series of costly and unsuccessful offensives was undertaken in France, and the Eastern offensive in Gallipoli was the victim of ruinous delays and half-measures.

The battles of the Western Front need not detain us long: they were all dismally alike. The battle began with a formidable "artillery preparation": a torrent of high-explosive shell sometimes succeeded in shattering the enemy's system of defences and always warned him to prepare for the attack. We remember best our own battles—Neuve-Chapelle in March, the German counter attack on Ypres, where poison gas was first used, Hooge in July, where the new armies enlisted for the war first fought in large numbers, Loos in September. The French battles were on a larger scale, and consequently more disastrous. People talked of a "war of attrition," as though the brains of statesmen and generals could devise nothing better than the methods of a chess player who goes on "swapping pieces." Such methods would have led to no final result, for each year brought to Germany as well as the Allies a supply of young recruits equal in numbers to the most lurid forecast of casualties. In these attacks, however, we lost more than the enemy.

Neuve-Chapelle, Hooge and Loos.

The early stages of this fighting produced a political crisis in England. The cry arose that there was a shortage of shells. It was true: the War Office had organised a striking expansion of munitions industry since August 1914, but it was nothing like sufficient. Civil engineering firms were eagerly seeking to help, but the War Office tradition was against entrusting the manu-

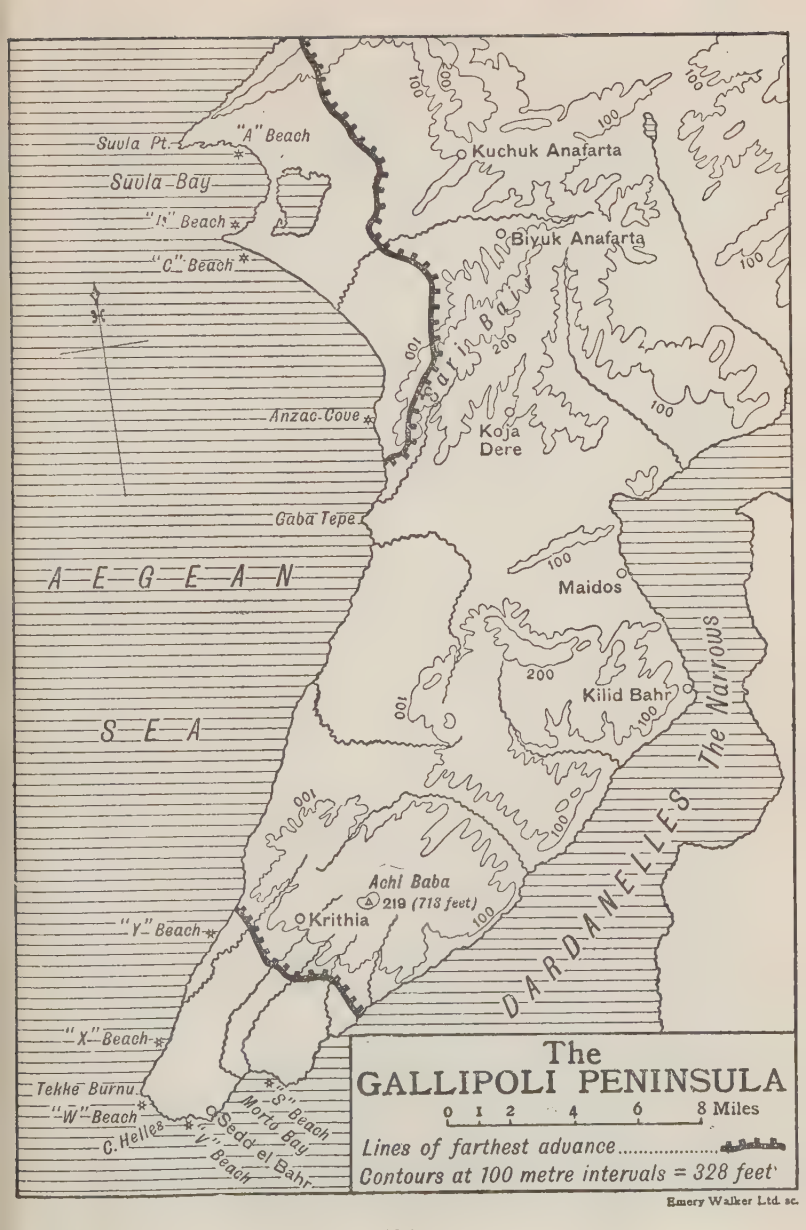
The Munitions Crisis

facture of lethal weapons to any but tried experts. Lloyd George made himself the mouthpiece of the engineering manufacturers, and succeeded in wresting the control of munition manufacture from the War Office altogether. This and other events led to the formation of a Coalition Government. In other words, the Conservative chiefs took office under Asquith, some of Asquith's Liberal colleagues retiring to make room for them. Lloyd George, now Minister of Munitions, established his reputation as a fearless leader intent on mobilising the whole nation for the winning of the war. Munitions were ultimately multiplied a hundred-fold and more.

But the most critical events of the year took place neither in England nor in France nor in Russia, but on the waters of the Dardanelles and the slopes of the peninsula of Gallipoli. As soon as Turkey had entered the war (in the previous autumn), the question of securing control of the Straits and of Constantinople began to be discussed, and since then Russia had begged her Allies to undertake some diversion that would distract the Turks on her own Southern frontier. It is difficult to estimate with any certainty the results of a successful assault on Constantinople, but it is reasonable to suppose that: (i) it would have "decapitated" Turkey and possibly driven her out of the war; (ii) it would have released Russian wheat from the Black Sea and enabled Western munitions to reach Russia; (iii) it would have led Greece, Bulgaria and Roumania to join the Allies, for all of them were intending to enter the war on the winning side; (iv) these armies might well have crumpled up Austrian resistance, and placed Germany in a hopeless position.

The Problem of Constantinople

Constantinople might be reached by a naval expedition up the Straits, or by a military expedition landed either at Gallipoli or on the coast of the mainland to the north of Gallipoli. The naval attack would, of course, be predominantly British; the land forces might be supplied by the Western Allies if they would consent to spare troops from France, or they might be supplied by Greece and



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possibly Bulgaria. But this latter resource was ruled out by Russia. The Tsar placed an absolute veto upon the King of Greece leading his army into Constantinople in March. At that date the Turkish defence was entirely inadequate, and it may be that the Tsar's advisers, by this decision, dictated by an insane jealousy, sealed the fate of their country.

Since the Greek Army was excluded and no army available from the West, a purely naval plan was adopted and a fleet sent out to force its way through the Dardanelles. This fleet consisted, with one exception, of ships built before the new era in battleship construction inaugurated by the *Dreadnought* in 1905; such ships were practically useless against the Germans, but were considered a match for the Turkish forts on either side of the Dardanelles. An attack was delivered on 18th March, and resulted in the loss of three ships, after which the naval plan was abandoned. Yet the forts had been badly damaged, their ammunition nearly exhausted, and both Turkish and German observers confessed after the war, that if the naval attack had been renewed at once, it would probably have succeeded.

The Naval Attack

Meanwhile Kitchener had been converted to the idea of a military attack by means of a landing on the Gallipoli peninsula. On 25th April a British and Australian and New Zealander force of 50,000 men, under Sir Ian Hamilton, effected a landing, after displaying incomparable gallantry and suffering severe losses, but it failed to capture the heights which would have given it control of the peninsula. If only this attack had been made in February, or even in March, it could not have failed to succeed. In February the Turks had only 5000 men on the peninsula, in March 14,000, in April 42,000. In August a second attempt was made with large reinforcements and a new landing at Suvla Bay. The Allied force was now 120,000, but so was the Turkish force also. The attack failed, partly through lack of enterprise on the part of one of the commanding officers and partly through the resourcefulness of the German commander of the defence, Liman von Sanders,

Gallipoli

and the energy of one of his Turkish subordinates, Mustapha Kemal, afterwards ruler of Turkey. After this all hope was abandoned, the only cause for satisfaction being that the army was withdrawn without loss at the end of the year.

It may be that these efforts, in spite of ultimate failure, were not without result. The landing of 25th April seems to have helped to persuade Italy to join the Allies, as she did on 22nd May. Like so many other States, Italy could hardly remain permanently neutral. An Allied victory without her participation would see a new Serbia (Jugo-Slavia) in control of all the eastern side of the Adriatic, while a German victory would see Austria established more firmly than ever in Trieste and the Trentino. If Italy's action had not been accelerated by events in Gallipoli, she might have been impressed by the defeat of Russia and followed a different course. As it was, she joined too late to contribute to an easy victory. If she had joined at the beginning of the war, when the Russians swept over Galicia, she might have carried all before her. Entering the war during the Russian defeat, she encountered a firm Austrian resistance; the Italian front developed a "stalemate" on the north-eastern frontier, and the Italian armies could accomplish little either for themselves or their allies, except to occupy the attention of a large Austrian army.

Italian Intervention

By September the Gallipoli attempt had failed and the German offensive against Russia had succeeded. These facts decided King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, and he joined the Central Powers. The doom of Serbia was now prepared. Mackensen, the conqueror of the Russians, crossed the Danube and invaded the country from the north; the Bulgarians entered from the east. Serbia and her army were practically wiped off the map, and the Germans secured uninterrupted communication between Berlin and Constantinople. The bravery of the Serbs was equal to their sufferings; so also, it must be admitted, was their obstinacy. Up to the very last they refused to surrender the Macedonian district which, in defiance of every right,

The Ruin of Serbia

they had taken from Bulgaria in 1913; the Allies could not save them from the consequences of their own greed.

Twice already Greece had offered to join the Allies, and the offer had been rejected by the influence of Russia; now it was for the Allies to beg the assistance of Greece. King Constantine refused and Venizelos was dismissed, but the Allies established themselves in the Greek port of Salonika, and thus opened a new "Front," on which little of importance was accomplished till the final stages of the war.

Salonika

The naval warfare of 1915 opened with the thrilling action of the Dogger Bank (24th January). The Admiralty discovered by wireless that the German battle cruiser squadron[1] had left its base, guessed its course with unerring accuracy, and directed the British battle cruiser squadron from the Firth of Forth, under Beatty, to meet it on the Dogger Bank. When the squadrons met, the Germans, being the weaker, turned and fled. But for a shot which disabled Beatty's flagship and a mistake made as the result of the transference of the British command to Beatty's subordinate, the German squadron would almost certainly have been overtaken and destroyed.

The Dogger Bank

In the spring of this year the Germans announced their intention of destroying Allied commerce by submarine attack. But they had at this date only about two dozen submarines, and the attempt was a complete failure, and was abandoned in the course of the year. It had, however, two important results. In the first place it warned the British Admiralty; henceforth anti-submarine methods of defence received serious consideration. If the Germans had not given us this premature warning in 1915, it may well be that their grand attack, with 300 submarines in 1917, might have proved absolutely fatal to us. Twice, in fact, within a few months, the Germans undertook an illegal form of warfare with inadequate means and thus gave a warning that threw away their advantages.

Submarines and the Blockade

[1] Battle cruisers are faster, lighter and rather less powerfully armed than battleships.

The other occasion was the use of poison gas, already mentioned. If the Germans had saved up their poison gas until they had an overwhelming supply, who can say what would have happened? As it was, the military results were trivial. We improvised gas-masks, and adopted gas-warfare, which we had already considered but rejected as a barbarism. Before the end of the war more Germans than Allies were killed by this weapon.

The other result of this first submarine campaign came from the sinking of the *Lusitania* in May. That sensational event did not bring America into the war, as some hoped that it might, but it created an anti-German opinion in the States, and eased our own relations with America, already severely strained by the problems of blockade. Great Britain had to proceed very carefully in exercising her powers of restricting neutral trade, for if we exasperated the Americans beyond a certain point, they might prohibit the export of munitions to the Allies. America agreed that copper and rubber should not get through to German ports, but if it went to neutral ports in Holland and Sweden and thence to Germany, nothing was gained so far as we were concerned. In course of time a system of "rationing" neutral countries was adopted, but our blockade could not be made fully effective until America entered the war.

One far-distant campaign of 1915 began with promise and closed in anxiety. The expedition of the British Indian army to the Persian Gulf had occupied Basra, the port of Mesopotamia, in November 1914. In April 1915 a victory over the Turks at Shaiba encouraged the idea of a daring advance with most inadequate numbers, on Baghdad. As a result, Townshend was defeated at Ctesiphon in November and besieged in Kut, and the last month of the year was occupied in equipping an expedition for his relief. These Mesopotamian events clearly reflect the influence of Gallipoli. The facile successes of the first part of

Meso-potamia

the year were due to the concentration of Turkish defence on Constantinople; the disaster of Ctesiphon was the result of the failure at Suvla Bay.

In the domestic affairs of Great Britain the event of the year, apart from the establishment of the Coalition government and the Ministry of Munitions, came in its last month: the introduction of conscription for bachelors, which was obviously a prelude to general conscription. Some said that conscription should have been introduced at the beginning of the war. The answer was, that the military authorities did not want it and the civil population would not have tolerated it. The military authorities were getting all the men they could arm and train by the voluntary system, and the nation in general, especially the trade unionists, regarded conscription, however illogically, as something "Prussian" and unworthy of a free people. There was a genuine and widespread apprehension that, if once conscription was introduced, we should never get rid of it after the war was over. Only stern necessity, the outcome of the failures of 1915, proved to both the military authorities and the nation that conscription must be accepted. Once accepted, its great advantages were realised. When all were bound to serve, it was no longer a disgrace to be at home. Conscription enabled the military authorities not only to sweep reluctant civilians into the army, but to bring home from the army skilled engineers whose presence was more valuable in the factories than at the front. The Ministry of Munitions was assuming a more and more complete control of the whole manufacturing output of the nation. Industry as well as man-power was being mobilised under the direction of the State.

Conscription

At the end of 1915 Sir John French retired from the command of the British armies in France, and was succeeded by Sir Douglas Haig, who held the command until the end of the war. It is difficult to estimate the military gifts of the various soldiers who played leading parts in the war. This much, however, is certain; Sir Douglas Haig retained from first to last, in

Sir Douglas Haig

failure as in success, the absolute confidence of the officers and men he commanded. He was a very great gentleman, and after the war he devoted the whole of the remainder of his life to securing the welfare of the ex-servicemen, thousands of whom suffered unemployment in the years of bad trade which followed.

(iii) 1916

1916 was the most depressing year of the war. We may summarise its leading features by saying each of the combatants on the Western Front undertook an immense and fruitless offensive, and that a temporary Russian revival induced Roumania to join the Allies—to her cost rather than their advantage. The seas were quiet but for the much debated Battle of Jutland.

The Battles of Verdun and the Somme

In 1915 Germany had been amazingly, and from a military standpoint deservedly, successful, but she had by no means won the war. What was she to do next? Build submarines, of course, and save them until she had an apparently overwhelming supply. But how should she use her armies? Perhaps her best course would have been to strike again at Russia, and attempt to drive her into peace. Instead, her military chief, at this date Falkenhayn, chose to attack in the West, and selected Verdun as his offensive—perhaps because it was conveniently near to Germany, perhaps because, as a historic fortress, it was a "trophy" of war, perhaps because the French defences there were not as well prepared as they might have been. The Battle of Verdun began on 21st February, and lasted right through the spring and summer. The French were determined to hold the "trophy," and consequently could yield very little ground. As a result they lost more men than if they had allowed their front to be more elastic; the French casualties were 460,000, half as many again as the German casualties.

On 1st July the British opened their great counter-offensive known as the Battle of the Somme. Let us take a skilled eye-witness's description of what our armies had to

attack. "The first and second systems of the German front each consisted of several lines of deep trenches, well provided with bomb-proof shelters. . . . The front of the trenches in each system was protected by wire entanglements, many of them in two belts forty yards broad, built of iron stakes interlaced with barbed wire often as thick as a man's finger. The numerous woods and villages were turned into veritable fortresses. Behind his second system of trenches, the enemy had several other lines already completed."[1] In the first month of the battle, our losses were three times those of the Germans, and they continued greater until the end of it. Such was the cost of a five-mile advance on a twenty-mile front.

These battles proved the ghastly futility of frontal attacks, "prepared" by artillery bombardment, against the modern systems of defence strengthened by barbed wire and machine guns. Mr. Lloyd George, at a later date, described such methods as "the tactics of the Stone Age,"—a phrase one can only criticise by saying that it is very unfair to our remote ancestors. Was there not a better way? The fighting men of the middle ages had advanced to battle clad in armour. The experience of the Great War had already led to the reintroduction of the helmet, or steel trench-hat. But how were the bodies of the attackers to be carried over barbed wire and defended from machine guns? The answer was "the Tank," or armed "caterpillar" car. Ever since the first winter of the war, inventors, encouraged by Mr. Churchill, had been experimenting with such vehicles, but the military authorities had thought little of them. Still, a few Tanks were built and, in the stress of the Somme battle, the army demanded them. Those who had devised the Tank and realised its possibilities were most reluctant to accede to the army's request. These men envisaged a "Tank battle," in which several hundred of these monsters would lead a surprise attack upon an enemy unwarned by the orthodox artillery "preparation." To allow a few Tanks to take part in the Battle of the Somme seemed to be giving

[1] Churchill, *The World Crisis*, III, p. 172.

away an invaluable secret. Still the Tanks were sent, and did useful work, and happily the Germans learnt much less from our premature use of Tanks than we learnt from their premature use of submarines. But the day of the Tank battle had not yet come.

On the 3rd June, Brussilov, probably the best of the Russian generals, opened an offensive on the southern half of the enormous Russian Front. Its power, no doubt, was trivial by Western standards, but it sufficed to defeat the Austrians, who retreated rapidly over a wide front and lost scores of thousands of prisoners. Roumania, with her eyes fixed on the Transylvanian province of Hungary, determined to take the plunge, and invaded Transylvania at the beginning of September. Then the German military organisation put forth what can only be called an astounding effort. In spite of all that Germany had on her hands, an army was found and entrusted to Falkenhayn, who had recently handed over the supreme control to Hindenburg and Ludendorff. Falkenhayn and Mackensen fell on the two wings of the Roumanian army and rolled it back out of Hungary and the greater part of Roumania. The addition of another nation to the Allied cause seemed to have meant nothing but an extension of the territory under German control. In Greece the struggle of contending factions, royalist and Venizelist, had reached the pitch of civil war. France and Britain did what they could to support Venizelos, but the Russian government had no love of anti-royalists even when they were pro-Ally, and Italy did not desire Greece as a partner, because she might have to surrender to her the Greek-inhabited islands of the Ægean (called the Dodecanese) which she had taken from Turkey in 1912.

Roumania and Greece

The Battle of Jutland (31st May) was the only occasion when the two Grand Fleets, on which so many millions and so much naval science had been expended, came within sight of one another. Each Grand Fleet was preceded by its battle cruiser squadron, and most of the fighting at Jutland was between these squadrons, the

Jutland

British losses being the heavier. When the two Grand Fleets came in view of one another, the German Grand Fleet turned and fled, and it was unwise to pursue it into the enemy's minefield. Controversy still rages as to whether Jellicoe, by different tactics, could have secured a full battle, and the destruction of the German fleet. Probably the last word in the matter is Mr. Churchill's remark that Jellicoe was the only man on either side who " could have lost the war in an afternoon." The ruin of our Grand Fleet would have been fatal; the ruin of the German Grand Fleet would have made comparatively little difference; so discretion was the better part of valour. The statistics of losses in the actual fighting were not flattering to us, but the results of a victory were secured, for the German fleet never ventured out again.

Mesopotamia and East Africa

There was nothing very gratifying to show for the year's work in Mesopotamia. Kut fell in April, after the failure of two attempts to relieve it. None the less, both in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, transport arrangements were in progress which would produce results at a later date. In a still more distant theatre, 1916 produced an achievement which, though it made no difference to the chances of ultimate victory, was a remarkable triumph over the obstacles set by tropical swamps, forests and mountains—namely, the conquest of German East Africa, now called Tanganyika. This was the work of South African and British-Indian troops commanded by the South African statesman, General Smuts. When the work was practically completed, General Smuts came to England and served for the rest of the war as an Imperial member of Mr. Lloyd George's Cabinet.

Air Raids and Air-Power

One of the least important aspects of the war had been the Zeppelin raids over Allied countries. These began in 1915, and several hundred civilian casualties caused an outcry in England which must have provoked wry smiles in the trenches of Flanders. In September one of these monsters was brought down by aeroplane attack on English soil, and before the end of the

year the Zeppelin was proved no match for aeroplane defence. In France also the British airmen regained the decisive superiority over the enemy which they had temporarily lost in the spring owing to the agility of the German Fokker machine.

In the last month of the year Mr. Asquith's Coalition Government was overthrown by Mr. Lloyd George, backed by Conservative politicians and the leading newspaper proprietors, such as Lord Northcliffe, who owned both *The Times* and the *Daily Mail*. The new Prime Minister devised an entirely new political machine for the purpose of "winning the war." There was a War Cabinet of five members, freed from all departmental duties, containing a Labour representative in Mr. Henderson, and notable imperial rulers in Lord Curzon and Lord Milner. New ministries, controlling Food and Shipping, were created, and several ministerial posts were entrusted, not to politicians, but to business men. Critics have no difficulty in proving that there was an element of "window-dressing" in these changes. In fact names were changed more than things; but this admission does not belittle Mr. Lloyd George's achievement. The nation, necessarily kept in ignorance of essential facts about the war that could not be revealed to the enemy, needed a tonic, and Mr. Lloyd George was the man to administer it. He may not have deserved confidence more than Mr. Asquith; his merit lay in the fact that he secured it. Indeed it was a feature of the depressing warfare of 1916 that it provoked in most belligerent countries a demand for new leadership. The following spring saw Joffre deposed from the command of the French armies in favour of Nivelle, and Bethmann-Hollweg, the powerless but pacific Chancellor of the German Empire, deposed in favour of Michaelis, who was a mere tool of the soldiers. It also saw the outbreak of the Russian Revolution.

Lloyd George Prime Minister

(iv) 1917

We described 1916 as the most depressing year of the war. 1917 was terrible, but it sowed the seeds of hope. On the Western Front, it is true, the fighting was as tragic and wasteful as that of 1916, but in other spheres were three events of immense significance, the German U boat (submarine) offensive, the entry of America, and the Russian Revolution. Of these events the first two were cause and effect, but the third was, as Mr. Kipling says, "another story." The Germans announced that they would sink all Allied and neutral commerce at sight on 31st January; America entered the war on 5th April; the Russian Revolution began on 8th March. The Germans reckoned that the submarine campaign would bring in America, but they also reckoned, rightly, that a year would pass before American armies could play an important part in the fighting, for the United States were practically an unarmed nation when they declared war. The Germans hoped to starve Great Britain out of the war within that year, and they came within a measurable distance of succeeding. They adopted the submarine campaign because they despaired of winning the war by purely military methods. But suppose the Russian Revolution had been foreseen by them, or had broken out two months earlier, and enabled them to transfer to France their Eastern armies at the beginning instead of at the end of 1917; presumably they would not have embarked on the submarine campaign, and America would not have joined the Allies; and what then? We cannot tell.

Three Great Events

Germany opened her campaign with about three hundred U boats, as they were called, and for many months continued to build them faster than we destroyed them; but as these vessels have to spend about two-thirds of their time resting and refitting, the number in active employ thoughout the last two years of the war was slightly over a hundred. It reached

The Submarine Campaign

its maximum in October 1917. However, the period of maximum success for the U boats had come earlier, in April 1917, when over 800,000 tons of shipping were sunk. This was the month when things were blackest, and no subsequent month proved anything like so expensive. From September 1917 onwards to the end of the war the monthly loss averaged about 300,000 tons. If we take statistics of the destruction of submarines, we find the "best" months for us were September 1917 and May 1918, in each of which fourteen were sunk. In all 130 were sunk in the last two years of the war, which rather more than balanced the rate of construction.

These statistics show that it was not chiefly by destroying U boats that we defeated the U-boat menace. Our methods of defence were many and various : (i) Arming of merchant ships with guns. The U boat's favourite method was to come to the surface and fire its gun; but if its intended victim had a gun, it had to stay under water and fire a torpedo, of which submarines could carry only a small supply. (ii) Q boats. These were "decoy" ships, well-armed vessels disguised as ordinary merchantment to lure the U boat to destruction. (iii) Detector nets, stretched across areas of the sea, which both entangled the submarine and revealed his movements. (iv) The convoy system, whereby mercantile vessels travelled in groups, guarded by destroyers, and directed by wireless Admiralty information. This was the most important measure of all. (v) Shipbuilding at full speed to replace the ships sunk. (vi) Economy in the use of imported materials, *e.g.* the rationing of food by means of food tickets. (vii) Emergency agriculture to replace imports by home-grown supply.

By such methods as these the essential commerce of the Allies was preserved, though the Germans sank nearly ten million tons of shipping in the course of the war. We were the chief, though by no means the only, sufferers. Among the neutrals we think first of America, because America was a Great Power, but Norway suffered far more than the States, because Norway is a poor country, with shipping as

her principal industry. Norway lost 800 ships and 1200 seamen.

The facts leading up to the American declaration of war are described elsewhere (see p. 609). Its immediate importance was threefold: first, it eased the financial position. The Allies had bought far more from America than they could pay for, and as debts accumulate, the debors' "credit" declines, and the price he has to pay rises. Henceforth American "credit" was at the disposal of the Allies. Secondly, it was now possible to restrict far more severely the rights of neutrals to trade with Germany and with countries from which Germany drew an overland or trans-Baltic supply. Thirdly, and most important of all, the Allies now knew for certain that, if they could hold out another year, the future would be theirs.

The Entry of America

The Russian Revolution, strange as it may seem, was, on its outbreak, welcomed in England only less warmly than the entry of America a month later. We knew that the corruption and inefficiency of many of the Tsar's ministers had hampered the Russian effort: we had noticed that, of late, the worse ministers seemed to be ousting the better ones from power. The Revolution, we believed, would set free rather than restrict the military energies of Russia. And indeed, from the standpoint of munitions and equipment, Russia was in a better position than at any previous stage of the war, for the Western Allies had been pouring in supplies along the new railway from the ice-free port of Murmansk on the Arctic Sea. But in fact the fundamental cause of the Revolution of March was weariness, and the purpose of the revolutionists was to withdraw their country from the war.

The Russian Revolution

For several months, however, the essentially pacifist nature of the Revolution was disguised. The leaders of the parliament (Douma) secured power, and a sort of Liberal-Labour Coalition government was formed. The most conspicuous member of this Coalition was a socialist orator named Kerensky, who was genuinely anxious to secure victory first

and peace only afterwards and in concert with the Western Allies. Opposed to this mainly middle-class Republican government were the Bolsheviks,[1] who stood for immediate peace and a socialistic reconstruction of society. These formed "Soviets," or councils, in the munition factories and the army. Kerensky and General Brussilov hoped to save the situation by opening an offensive against the Austrians. This offensive opened on 1st July, and for a fortnight all went well. After that, mutinies broke out and the Russian armies simply melted away. In the autumn Kerensky's position began to be desperate. He first allied himself with, and afterwards deserted, a general named Kornilov, who had a plan for erecting a military dictatorship of the Cromwellian kind as the only resource against the socialist fanatics. Early in November the Bolshevik Trotsky seized Petrograd (St. Petersburg), and Kerensky fled from the country. The new Bolshevik government signed an armistice with Germany, which led to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in the following year—a treaty which was, of course, wiped out by the final victory of the Allies a few months later. Months before the end of 1917 German troops were passing from Russia to the Italian and French fronts. Some say, however, that contact with Russian pacificism affected the spirit of Germany, and prepared the way for the German collapse a year later. So many causes contributed to that collapse that it is hard to know how much weight to attach to this suggestion.

We return to the Western Front. In the course of the winter, the Germans had prepared for themselves an entirely new line (though "line" is a somewhat misleading description of a defensive system seven miles thick) stretching more or less straight from Arras to Laon. To this they unobtrusively withdrew, and when the British and French began to advance in the middle

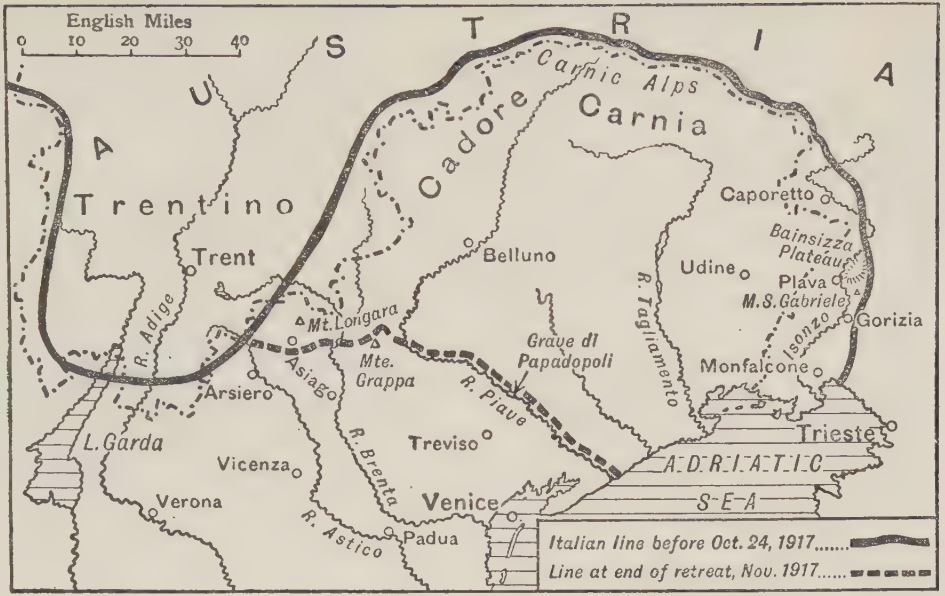
Nivelle's Offensive

[1] The word Bolshevik simply means "majority," and arises from the fact that the Russian socialists had at an earlier date split into two groups, the larger (Bolshevik) standing for socialism by revolution and the smaller (Menshevik) for socialism by easy stages under the forms of law, *i.e.* the creed of the British Labour Party.

of February, they encountered hardly any opposition. It is difficult to realise now the thrill with which we read of this advance. Measuring, as the uninstructed did, the results of battles by geographical tests, it seemed to us a splendid thing to advance fifteen or twenty miles on a sixty-mile front. As a matter of fact the retreat was a German success. It gave them a line admirably served by strategic railways, whereas for us the new Front was backed by a desert which the retreating Germans had created. The retreat dislocated the Allied plans for a combined offensive. Nivelle, the new French commander-in-chief, attempted in April a French offensive in Champagne, but it was a disastrous failure, and led to serious mutinies in the French army, suppressed, however, by the firmness and tact of Pétain, who at once replaced Nivelle as commander-in-chief. There was also at the same time a political *défaitiste* movement for immediate peace, and it is just possible that France, which had suffered far more in every way than we had, might have abandoned the struggle but for the tonic recently administered by the American declaration of war.

On the British front there was a brilliant victory in June, when the German lines on the Wytschaete ridge, just south of Ypres, were mined and blown into the air by the most terrific earthquake ever produced by human contrivance. This, however, proved a prelude to a long, weary battle, known as Ypres III or Paschendaele, which extended through the late summer and autumn. It was, perhaps, the worst battle of the war, another "Somme," in which the attackers suffered many more casualties than the defenders, and so, in return for a geographical gain, suffered a real loss. An exceptionally wet season contributed to the misery of Paschendaele and reduced the heavy flats of Flanders to a quagmire in which even Tanks could scarcely operate. It is said that the objective of this battle was the German submarine bases at Ostend and Zeebrugge; but long before the battle was abandoned, the attainment of these goals was evidently hopeless. The next year was to prove that Ostend and Zeebrugge could be well left to the

Paschendaele



THE BATTLE OF CAPORETTO.

NOTE.—The country north of a line drawn from Asiago to the Bainsizza Plateau is mountain country; south of that, it is mostly plain.

daring and skill of the navy. Some say, also, that the importance of these places as submarine bases was exaggerated, and that the new long-distance submarine could operate quite effectively from the German naval headquarters at Wilhelmshaven.

A striking contrast to the Battle of Paschendaele, with its long-drawn "orthodox" agony, was provided by the Battle of Cambrai in November. Here at last a "Tank battle" was staged. Five hundred Tanks attacked at dawn, without any warning given to the enemy by preliminary bombardment. As a result, the whole German trench system was penetrated in a few hours on a six-mile front, 10,000 prisoners and 200 guns were captured, without more than 1,500 British casualties. The success was so rapid that we were unprepared for maintaining it; the Germans retaliated with another novel form of attack, the gas-filled shell, and most of the new ground was lost. Still, the "Tank battle" was justified; it was a pity it had not been given its trial earlier.

Cambrai

But the principal battle of the autumn was not fought in France. Ludendorff, the nominal subordinate, but actually the controller of Hindenburg, was preparing the final German offensive, and its first Act was to be staged on the Italian Front. The German leaders not only knew that there were disloyal divisions in the Italian army; they knew their position in the line. An attack on the Italian Front in its weak sector might crumple up the Italian armies and drive Italy out of the war; if it did not, it would certainly compel the French and British to send reinforcements to Italy and thus weaken their own Fronts. The attack was launched under von Bülow at Caporetto on 24th October, and certain divisions of the Italian army gave way in a spirit which their own commander described as "naked treason." In the next few weeks the Italian army, losing 800,000 men, was pushed back sixty miles, to the river Piave, north of Venice. The situation was saved by the heroism of the loyal majority of the troops, by the rains which flooded the rivers and impeded German

The Italian Collapse

advance, and by the timely arrival of French and British reinforcements.

In the minor theatres of war, the events of 1917 were very encouraging. Roumania maintained a plucky resistance in the north-east corner of her land, undismayed by the Russian collapse. In Greece a revolution, judiciously assisted by the Allies, overthrew King Constantine and enabled Venizelos to bring his country into the war at last. In March our Mesopotamian army, under Maude, entered Baghdad, the city of the Arabian Nights. In the same month, our Egyptian army, under Murray, having occupied the peninsula of Sinai between the arms of the Red Sea, encountered the Turks at Gaza, where battles had been fought between Saracens and Crusaders. Here the advance was checked for many months, but, a fortnight before Christmas, Murray's successor, Allenby, succeeded where Cœur de Lion had failed, and entered Jerusalem.

Baghdad and Jerusalem

(v) 1918

By the end of 1917 Russia had been driven out of the war, and Roumania, after a gallant resistance, was about to follow her and accept a dictated peace; Italy had been severely maimed. On the other hand, the attempt to destroy Allied commerce, to starve the islanders of food and the troops of munitions, was obviously failing, and an enormous American army would soon be coming. Everything pointed to a desperate German offensive in France in the early spring. For the Allies the question was, where would it come? An Allied Military Council had been established at Versailles, and Sir Henry Wilson, our representative, foretold (correctly) that it would attack the British Front between St. Quentin and Cambrai. But the French held that it would attack their own Front in Champagne, and their views were allowed to prevail. The British were persuaded to take over fourteen more miles of the Front, thus thinning out their line. The Versailles Council recommended that a general Franco-

The Inevitable Attack

British reserve should be formed and entrusted to Foch, in order that it might be thrown at once into whatever part of the Front was attacked, but this was vetoed by both Haig and Pétain, the two commanders-in-chief. There was as yet no unity of command.

When the attack came there were 300,000 trained troops in England, which might well have been in France. At the time it was supposed that these troops were kept back from a foolish fear of a German invasion of England. We have since been told by Mr. Churchill, who was a member of the government, that they were kept back because Mr. Lloyd George was determined that they should not be "wasted" in another battle of the Paschendaele type, and feared that, if he let them pass under Sir Douglas Haig's control, he would not be able to prevent them being so used. This fact, for we must take it as such, throws a curious light on the relations between the government and its commander-in-chief.

Before we enter upon the greatest battle in history, let us form a picture of what "the Front" meant in the last stages of "trench warfare," before the German offensive pulled both armies away from their moorings and re-established "the moving battle" as it had been known in the first months of the war. I quote the same skilled eye-witness as before: "Very different was the state of the lines from what I had known in 1916. The system of continuous trenches with their barbed-wire networks . . . the first line of which was manned in great strength and often constituted the strongest line of resistance, was gone. Contact with the enemy was maintained by a fringe of out-posts. Behind them, over a distance of two or three thousand yards, were sited intricate systems of machine-gun nests. Barbed-wire networks, instead of being drawn laterally in a continuous belt across the Front, lay obliquely with intervals so as to draw the enemy into avenues mercilessly swept by machine-gun fire. Two thousand yards further to the rear were the field battery positions. Behind these, brigade headquarters, and, behind again, groups of irregularly placed heavy batteries." [1]

[1] Churchill, *The World Crisis*, IV, p. 389.

Emery Walker Ltd. sc.

The attack came, where Wilson had foretold, on 21st March. It was preceded, in accordance with the new German tactics, by only a brief bombardment of gas-filled shells. The Germans launched 800,000 against 300,000, and at the decisive points had a superiority of four to one. They had chosen the weakest part of our line, and broke right through it. Further north, however, the British Third Army under Byng held firm, and retreated only when it was necessary for maintaining the continuity of the line. On 28th March the German attack was extended northwards to Arras, and was decisively repulsed by British forces less than half the number of the attackers. That was, we are told, the decisive day of the decisive year of the war. The British army, after a week's fighting, had stemmed the greatest offensive ever launched. The line had bulged, but no more. Ludendorff had shot his bolt. The losses of men had been terrible, but less than those of the Germans, who could less afford to lose. The losses of guns and every kind of munitions had been immense, but the stocks accumulating at home were greater, and by the end of April (after a second German advance about to be recorded), the British army in France had more munitions of every kind than before 21st March. The munition workers took no Easter holidays that year.

21st March, 1918

During the week of this battle, officially called the Second Battle of the Somme, Foch was appointed, with French and British approval, to the supreme command of the armies on the Western Front. Unity of control was an excellent thing in itself, and Foch, it seems agreed, was the greatest soldier in the two armies, but the main causes of the victory must be sought elsewhere than in the genius of one man.

On 9th April the Germans opened a second offensive, called the Battle of the Lys, on the northern part of the British Front. Again the line was pierced. The danger was really less than that of 21st March, when German success would have cut the Franco-British line in two; but the situation was anxious, for a decisive victory would have carried the enemy to Calais and Boulogne, and disorganised our supply-routes to

The Battle of the Lys

our armies. Once again the Germans were held at bay after about a week. Meanwhile the Americans were beginning to come, in response to an urgent appeal from Europe; 120,000 landed in April, 220,000 in May. Over a million had sailed by the end of June, and a million more were to follow. Had the war continued into 1919, the American army would have become the largest in Europe. From Great Britain it was really impossible to raise more men, and an unwise attempt to apply conscription to Ireland threw the country into the hands of Sinn Fein, provoked a rebellion, and ultimately led to the establishment of the Irish Free State. The public at home was cheered, during this anxious April, by the heroic and successful naval assaults upon the German submarine harbours of Ostend and Zeebrugge.

The Third German Attack

On 27th May the Germans delivered their third offensive, on the French lines between Soissons and Reims, and achieved an advance of fourteen miles in one day —a record for the Western Front. During the last two months the French had been somewhat scornful of the British retreats, and regarded their own line as impregnable. This battle restored good feeling between the Allies by making them brethren in misfortune. The attack was held, again after about a week, by American troops at Château-Thierry on the Marne. The Germans were now nearer to Paris than they had been at any time since September 1914, and an enormous gun, nicknamed Big Bertha, lobbed shells into the French capital sixty miles away. The Parisians were not discouraged.

The Turn of the Tide

The Germans had now made three great bulges in the old Western Front. Their line was much longer; it was much "looser," because their old defences had been the work not of days and weeks, but of months and years; and their troops were fewer. In every respect their position, relatively to the Allies, was far worse than before their victories—if such they are to be called. On 15th July a fourth offensive was opened at Reims, and failed completely. On 18th July a successful French counter-offensive under Mangin, led by a vast array of Tanks, marked the turn of the tide. In the extreme north the

Germans had a fifth offensive prepared under Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria; but that offensive was never delivered. In Mr. Churchill's vivid words: "Rupprecht, whose hammer was actually uplifted in Flanders, was frozen where he stood. At first it was a mere postponement: a week or two while the German position in the Marne salient was reorganised. Then a few divisions were taken from his army to help in the reorganisation; and then a few more; and then another week's delay. Thus Rupprecht remained for twenty days waiting for the signal. But the signal never came."[1]

The General Advance

It is impossible to give a complete account, however brief, of the Allied advance which now began, for the Allied offensive, unlike the German, was general and continuous. Foch had an ever-increasing force at his disposal, and could afford a combined advance all along the line, such as had not been seen in the West since the German invasion of August 1914. Perhaps the most notable date was the opening of the British advance in front of Amiens, under Rawlinson. Ludendorff afterwards wrote that 8th August was "the black day of the war." Here at last was the "Tank battle" on a vast scale, and the Germans crumbled before it. In the course of September the "Hindenburg line," which the Germans had made for themselves nearly two years before, was swept away, and the Allies began to move forward towards the French frontier. On 12th September the American army began the special task assigned to it, an advance northwards from St. Mihiel, east of Verdun, which should ultimately pinch the German armies against the projecting corner of the frontier of neutral Holland. On 15th September the German government opened correspondence with President Wilson, with a view to peace.

The Balkan Transformation

Hitherto hardly anything had mattered in 1918 except the Western Front; but now dramatic events began elsewhere. On 15th September the forces of five nations—French, British, Italian, Serbian and Greek—under a French commander, opened an offensive gainst Bulgaria on a front stretching from Salonika

[1] Churchill, *The World Crisis*, IV, 502.

to the Adriatic. Bulgaria collapsed and was granted an armistice on 30th September. The Serbian army re-occupied their own country, and the Serb populations of Austria-Hungary broke into revolt. The new and enlarged Serbia—Jugo-Slavia—sprang spontaneously to life. To the north, Roumania re-entered the war on the eve of its conclusion.

The Downfall of Turkey

On 19th September, Allenby, with an army largely drawn from India, attacked the Turkish lines north of Jerusalem. Here at last was an opening for cavalry. Damascus fell by the end of the month, and by the end of October, Aleppo. In Mesopotamia the British army defeated the army opposed to it, and occupied Mosul. Between them, in the deserts of Arabia, Colonel Lawrence had been accomplishing his amazing exploits as a leader of the Arab revolt. Turkey went out of the war on 30th October, exactly a month after Bulgaria.

The Italian Victory

On the Italian Front little of note had happened since the disasters of the last months of 1917, but now the Austrian Empire was obviously breaking up and Jugo-Slavia was establishing itself on the coveted Adriatic shores. An Italian offensive opened on 24th October and Austria secured an armistice on 3rd November.

The Armistice

Thus the Germans were losing their Allies in the East and their armies in the West. At home the bodies of their people were being starved by the blockade and their minds, perhaps, enfeebled by the propaganda of the Bolsheviks. The German fleet mutinied, and a revolution overturned the thrones of the Kaiser and all the minor German princes. On 9th November, William II fled to Holland. Ludendorff had already resigned. Only Hindenburg, a man of less ability but far finer character, remained at his post, faithful to his country in its ruin. Meanwhile the correspondence between the German government and Wilson, and between Wilson and the European Allies was reaching its conclusion. At the beginning of the year Wilson had formulated his war aims under Fourteen Points, the essential features of this famous summary being: (i) "self-determination," *i.e.* that

frontiers should be drawn in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants, and (ii) a League of Nations to prevent future wars. Germany agreed to accept the Fourteen Points, and the Allies were asked if they did so. They assented with one subtraction and one addition. The subtraction was the omission of a vague phrase about the establishment of "freedom of the seas," a freedom which already existed in peace and obviously could not be allowed in war; the addition was a demand that Germany should pay for damage done to the civilian population of the Allies "by land, by sea and from the air." Thus amended, the Fourteen Points were accepted as the political basis of the armistice, a set of principles to which the future peace treaty should conform. It remained for Foch to fix the military terms, and he insisted on the evacuation of all territory west of the Rhine and the surrender of such a quantity of guns and munitions as would render Germany incapable of renewing hostilities however much she might dislike the terms of the peace treaty. The German fleet was also surrendered and taken into British custody.

So the Armistice was signed, and came into force at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the year. That morning, by an odd coincidence, Canadian troops had entered Mons. For the British race the war ended exactly where it began.

The statistics of the Great War could be elaborated to an indefinite extent. They would prove, what needs no proof, that the war was an exhibition of human energy and endurance, not only far surpassing anything seen in the world before, but equally far surpassing anything that, before 1914, had been conceived as possible. If only one half of the energy then devoted to the works of hatred and destruction could now be devoted to the works of constructive co-operation! We will content ourselves with statistics of the destruction of human life. Germany lost 2,305,000, Austria-Hungary 1,500,000, and Turkey 500,000. Among the Allies, Russia lost over 4,000,000, France 1,300,000, the British Empire 1,000,000, Italy 700,000,

The Death-roll

and Serbia 800,000, relatively to her population much the heaviest loss of all. The other belligerents lost less than these. But for the wonderful skill of surgery in saving the wounded and medicine in averting or controlling epidemic disease, the loss would, of course, have been far greater. This was the only war of history in which deaths by disease fell short of deaths by wounds; and they fell very far short. I have not seen statistics of deaths by disease, but on the Western Front, at any rate, they must have been a comparatively trifling figure. None the less, the deaths by disease and famine among civilian populations, especially in Eastern Europe, indirectly due to the war and largely occurring after its cessation, amounted to several millions.

CHAPTER III

THE TREATIES

Post-war Ideals

During the long years of fighting, many people had said that this was "a war to end war"; it was not merely a war against Germany and her Allies, but a war against "militarism." Some assumed that Germany and her Allies had been the only States guilty of "militarism," and that their utter defeat would of itself secure the end in view. Others, better informed, knew that "militarism" was an ancient vice of nations, and that past history showed none to be wholly guiltless, but hoped that the war would leave victors and vanquished alike sadder and wiser, and altogether better. These looked beyond mere victory, and saw that the victors themselves would be tested by their conduct in making the terms of peace. There was, we were told, to be a League of Nations. But what was a League of Nations? The world was clearly not ripe (if it ever will be ripe) for a supernational government, controlling international affairs with indisputable authority as the Federal Government of the American Union controls its forty-eight States. The League could only be a "machine" for purposes of international co-operation between independent sovereign States. But suppose the independent States did not want to co-operate? The establishment of League "machinery" was important, but more important still was the establishment of what we now call "the League spirit."

President Wilson

Again, how were the defeated enemy States to be treated? President Wilson had declared for a "peace of justice" and not a "peace of vengeance." Mere vengeance is, of course, bad, though very human, but what was justice in this context? Is not the punishment of

criminals a department of justice, and had not Germany and Austria been "criminal"? On the other hand, does not "justice" demand that even criminals shall be sentenced by impartial judges and not by those whom they have wronged? There were no neutrals left in the world of sufficient calibre to try the issue, even if the Allies had wanted to invoke the assistance of such. But President Wilson seemed to combine many of the virtues of a neutral with the virtues of a belligerent, and that is why, at the beginning of 1919, he enjoyed a European prestige such as no one, perhaps, had ever enjoyed before. As soon as the war was over, Mr. Lloyd George had dissolved parliament, and won a sweeping victory for his Coalition by holding forth promises which many held to be both extravagant and immoral—promises to "hang the Kaiser" and make Germany pay for the whole cost of the war. Many Englishmen therefore looked to the American President rather than to their own Prime Minister to secure a wise and just peace, while the defeated peoples regarded him as their one hope of respite from remorseless vengeance. His reputation was not based on the lofty idealism of his speeches alone; he was the ruler of the one Great Power (except Japan, who would play no part in the European settlement), which had no "axe to grind," the one Great Power which had not been exasperated by four years of agony. Unfortunately Wilson proved unequal to the part he intended to play.

The Peace Conference, or Congress, which assembled in Paris at the beginning of 1919 was as unprecedented in scale as the war it concluded. Twenty-seven States were represented, not only the belligerent Allies, but a crowd of non-European States, from China to Peru, that had, for reasons of their own, made formal declarations of war upon Germany behind the protection of the British fleet. The delegates numbered many thousands; five hundred came from Great Britain alone. The British Dominions took part in the Conference and signed the Treaties as sovereign States,—a notable event in the evolution of the British Empire. But the most unprece-

The Peace Conference

dented feature was not the presence of the delegates of New Zealand and Peru; it was the absence of the delegates of Germany and her Allies. The treaties were not, like former treaties, "negotiated"; they were drawn up by one side, and submitted complete to the other, for acceptance or rejection. None the less, there was plenty of strife—inter-Allied strife—over their composition.

The leading figures of the Congress were President Wilson, and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain, France, and Italy,—Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Orlando. They were called "the Big Four," and Clemenceau was far the biggest of them, so far as the principal treaty, that with Germany, was concerned. Italy took little interest in the German treaty; her interests were centred on the Adriatic, where her rival was no longer the ruined empire of Austria, but her ex-ally, Serbia, or Jugo-Slavia. President Wilson was determined to secure the establishment of a League of Nations, but he was incapable of playing an effective part in the detailed negotiations owing to his ignorance of the complicated questions at issue. Moreover, he was by character ill-suited to the work. In America he had always been an autocrat, first as President of a University, then as Governor of a State and finally as President of the Union. He had never known the rough and tumble of politics. He was a philosopher rather than a diplomatist, as helpless in the whirlpool of Parisian intrigue as a country clergyman amid a gang of company promoters. Lloyd George owed his position to the fearless and tireless energy with which he had thrown himself into every movement that made for the effective prosecution of the war, but he had never before the war been an expert in foreign affairs. He was extraordinarily clever, but he had no clear principles of statesmanship to guide him: his interest seems to have been to secure a treaty that would seem to fulfil his recent election promises. Thus all three were easily dominated by Clemenceau.

The "Big Four"

Clemenceau was a very old man of nearly eighty. He had been mayor of Montmartre, a northern district of Paris,

when the Germans besieged the city forty-eight years before, and the bitterness of those times had entered into his soul. His aim was to secure, so far as in him lay, the utter ruin of the country he regarded as the eternal enemy of France. A League of Nations, a "new world," a "war to end war," "justice not vengeance"—these things were to him mere moonshine. France and Germany were enemies. In old days, when Germany was divided, France had the natural advantage. To-day, when Germany was united, and had a growing population of nearly seventy millions, while France had a stationary population of under forty millions, Germany had the natural advantage. The object of the treaty should be to cripple Germany. He could satisfy Wilson by accepting the League of Nations, to which he attached no importance; he could satisfy Lloyd George by including an extravagant scheme of "damages" or reparations, which Germany would have to undertake to pay. Probably he knew that Germany would never be able to pay them, but they would cripple her finances, and give France a legal right to remain in occupation of part of her territory. It was a policy of despair. It dominated the making of the treaty; happily it could not, in the long run, control the relations of the two countries. Wilson returned home a defeated and humiliated man in 1919, but it may be that he had sown the seeds of ultimate victory for his cause.

Clemenceau

We pass to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Germany returned Alsace-Lorraine to France; she also made over to France the coal mines of the Saar valley (to the North of Alsace), as compensation for the destruction of the French coalfields in the invaded area. The Saar province itself was to be governed for fifteen years by commissioners appointed by the League of Nations, after which period the inhabitants were to decide whether they would be annexed to France or to Germany. On the east, Germany surrendered the provinces of West Prussia and Posen and part of Silesia to the new (or revived)

The Treaty of Versailles

State of Poland. Danzig, the chief city of West Prussia and the only possible port of Poland, was inhabited almost entirely by Germans, so it was placed under the rule of the League of Nations commission. The effect of these arrangements was to isolate the German province of East Prussia from the rest of Germany, thus restoring a state of affairs that had existed before the first Partition of Poland in 1772. A small strip of Schleswig was, after a plébiscite or popular vote, to be transferred from Germany to Denmark.

The whole of the overseas empire of Germany was taken away from her, the various colonies being entrusted to various Allies under "mandates" from the League of Nations, which empowered the League to exercise a general supervision over the government of these colonies in the interests both of other nations and of the native inhabitants. Under these arrangements, German East Africa, for example, was transferred to Great Britain, German Southwest Africa to the British Union of South Africa, Togoland and the Cameroons to France.

Conscription was to be abolished in Germany, and the army reduced to 100,000. The navy was to be reduced to six battleships with certain minor craft, but no submarines. Germany was forbidden to maintain armed forces or fortifications on the left bank of the Rhine or within thirty miles of the right bank. In fact, for fifteen years all territory left of the Rhine and certain "bridge-heads" beyond it were to remain in Allied occupation as security for the carrying out of the treaty.

The financial clauses of the treaty, under the heading of "Reparations," were exceedingly complicated. Germany was to pay, partly in money and partly in goods such as coal and shipping, for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allies "by land, by sea and from the air," and this phrase was construed as entitling the Allies to include in their claim the payment of all pensions to the widows of the fallen and all separation allowances paid to wives during their husbands' period of service. This was an unscrupulous extension of the Armistice terms. No

Reparations

attempt was made to estimate in the treaty the sum due from Germany. Subsequent Allied Conferences produced fantastic figures such as £11,000,000,000. Cool financiers calculated that Germany would be unable to pay even the five per cent. interest on this sum; and that, consequently, even though Germany paid to the full measure of her capacity, her indebtedness would go on getting bigger and bigger till Domesday. What followed was the collapse of German currency. The German government printed so much paper money that by 1923 it had become entirely valueless. Before the war twenty marks went to the English pound; in May 1923, 200,000; in December the number of "noughts" after the "two" had been doubled. Meanwhile France had sent an invading army into the Ruhr coalfield beyond the Rhine to extort reparations by force, but they found the cost of the invasion greater than its profits. At last, in 1924, counsels of sanity prevailed. The French withdrew from the Ruhr, the Germans established a new and stable currency, and an international commission, under the presidency of General Dawes, an American financier, established a system of moderate and workable reparation payments. Under the Dawes scheme, Germany is now paying reparations to her creditors. The amounts paid are not sufficient to do her serious injury, nor such as to confer any very perceptible benefit on the receivers.

German Criticism of the Treaty

We have been led beyond the actual treaty-making of 1919 and must return to it. By May 1919, the draft of the treaty was complete and the German delegates were invited to Versailles to receive it, and were given three weeks to submit their comments on it. Their principal comment was that the treaty was inconsistent with the Fourteen Points on which the Armistice had been based. They said, in effect, that, if Germany had begun the war by tearing up one "scrap of paper," the Allies had ended it by tearing up another. This was a very grave charge, and the Allies met it by an elaborately argumentative reply. How will an impartial posterity judge between them? Wilson's Fourteen Points were vague

general propositions, and could be interpreted in many ways, *e.g.* "impartial adjustment of colonial claims"—could that cover the forfeiture of the whole of Germany's colonial empire? Could the Saar arrangement come under the heading of "self-determination" of frontiers by the inhabitants of the territory? It is plain, however, that the Treaty of Versailles was not the kind of treaty that the author of the Fourteen Points had in mind. In reply to the German criticisms, the Allies made certain concessions. For example, they agreed that there should be a plébiscite in Upper Silesia before that very important industrial district was handed over to Poland.[1] After that the Germans could do no more. The Allied blockade had been prolonged throughout the treaty-making period. Thousands of Germans, especially children, were on the verge of starvation. The treaty had to be signed, and was signed on 28th June.

The League of Nations

There was, after all, a redeeming feature. As General Smuts, one of the wisest of the British representatives in Paris, said, real peace would not be found in the terms of the treaty so much as in the machinery it created for its own revision. The first section of the Treaty of Versailles is the Covenant of the League of Nations. It seems somewhat out of place in the treaty with Germany, since Germany was for the time being expressly forbidden to join the League; no doubt it was put in the forefront to please President Wilson. We shall describe the constitution and the work of the League in the next chapter. At the foundation it was merely a League of Allies, and its work seemed more to maintain the treaty than to revise it. Moreover, it was soon to suffer a serious blow when President Wilson's own countrymen repudiated his work and refused membership of the League he had been at such pains to establish. None the less he and his British supporters, General Smuts and Lord Robert Cecil, had not laboured in

[1] The plébiscite was held a few years later, and produced an embarrassing result, for the German and Polish districts were hopelessly entangled. The League then drew a somewhat arbitrary line through the middle of the manufacturing district, giving Poland rather more than its share.

vain. In 1926 a new Germany was to take her rightful place as a leading member of the League, in a world that, whatever its shortcomings, was no longer convulsed by the passions of 1919.

It remained to settle affairs with Germany's allies, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey. The Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary had already ceased to exist. Serbia had swollen into Jugo-Slavia, Roumania had occupied the Roumanian districts of Hungary and Russia; the Czechs and Slovaks of Northern Austria had established their independence under the Presidency of their great leader, Dr. Masaryk, one of the most remarkable men of the day. The task of the statesmen of Paris was less to create than to regulate. The new Austria was a pathetic survival, a "tadpole State," with a vast head in the great city of Vienna and hardly any body. Though German by nationality, it was forbidden to form a union with Germany. Hungary was separated from Austria and forbidden to gratify its desire to establish a monarchy. Bulgaria not only failed to secure its rights at the expense of Serbia; it also lost its territory on the Ægean Sea, which went to Greece. The drawing of frontiers in Central and South-eastern Europe was exceedingly difficult, for the nationalities were not clearly separated. In all cases there were areas where two or more nationalities overlapped. The principles followed in 1919 may be formulated as: (i) self-determination; (ii) where problems arise, give the Ally rather than the enemy the benefit of the doubt.

Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria

The troubles that have arisen since the war have been due less to the frontiers themselves than to the conduct of the various governments. It is inevitable, for example, that there should be some Austrians under Italian rule or else some Italians under Austrian rule, unless great migrations are to be organised. No great evil is involved if the government, *e.g.* that of Italy, recognises the rights of its Austrian subjects to continue in their Austrian ways, to preserve, for example, their own schools and their

Frontier Problems

own language. Unfortunately many of the governments concerned have displayed a spirit of intolerance and tyranny like that of the Magyars towards their Serb subjects in the days before the war.

Again, the recognition of new nationalities has made a multiplication of new frontiers. This is no bad thing in itself, if the frontiers are not used as barriers against commercial intercourse. Unhappily most of the States of Central and South-eastern Europe, eager to promote their own industries at the expense of those of their neighbours, have adopted rigidly "protective" policies, and entered upon a "war of tariffs": a war in which, as in other wars, all are ultimately the losers. The old Austria-Hungary, with all its faults, was a great area of free trade. One of the principal causes of the immense prosperity of the United States is that it is a vast area of free trade. If each of the forty-eight States attempted to be "self-sufficient," *e.g.* to make its own motor cars, and protected itself against its forty-seven neighbours, the total real wealth of the United States would very soon be halved or quartered. Something of the same kind has been happening in the valley of the Danube where once the Austrian Empire stood.

The most troublesome territorial questions of Central Europe arose out of the rivalry of Italy and Jugo-Slavia.

The Adriatic

When Italy joined the Allies in 1915, she had driven a hard bargain, and had secured, by the secret Treaty of London, a promise of not only the Trentino (in the Alps) and Trieste, but also the coast of Dalmatia, except Fiume, which was to go to Serbia. But Dalmatia has a Slav population, and the Jugo-Slav delegates at Paris, supported by Wilson, objected most strongly to the fulfilment of the secret treaty. In September 1919 D'Annunzio, an Italian poet who had become famous as a daring airman, seized Fiume in defiance of his own government, and remained in occupation for fifteen months. In 1920 the Jugo-Slav and Italian governments made a treaty at Rapallo by which all Dalmatia, except Zara and Fiume, passed to Jugo-Slavia. Fiume became independent of both

countries, and, as a result, this once flourishing commercial port is now ruined! Italy and Jugo-Slavia have since been rivals for the control of the little State of Albania.

Bolshevik Russia was excluded from all part in the Congress of Paris, and would have refused part in it if it had been invited. The Allied Powers recognised the existence of the new States of Poland, Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania that had revolted from Russia and established themselves on the Baltic coast. They drew a frontier between Poland and Lithuania, allotting the city of Vilna to the latter; whereupon Poland seized it, and holds it to this day (1928). The problem of Vilna illustrates the difficulty of drawing frontiers in accordance with nationality, for at least half of its population is neither Polish nor Lithuanian, but consists of Russians and Jews. The Poles, however, outnumber the Lithuanians.

The Baltic States

There remains the treaty dealing with Turkey, called the Treaty of Sèvres. This treaty allotted Iraq (Mesopotamia) to Great Britain and Syria to France, both under mandates, and recognised the independence of the Hejaz (the Arabian coast of the Red Sea, including the Moslem holy cities of Mecca and Medina). Palestine was placed under a British mandate as a national home for the Jews; this modern "return from Captivity" is one of the most curious and interesting of post-war experiments. Turkey in Europe was reduced to a mere strip, stretching from Constantinople to Gallipoli. Moreover, the freedom of the Straits was to be secured by neutral zones on either side of their waters. These, and the city of Constantinople, were to be occupied by Allied troops until the treaty was signed. Turkey in Asia was practically reduced to Asia Minor, and even here Greece, through the powerful advocacy of Venizelos, secured the city of Smyrna and the country behind it. The Sultan at Constantinople was entirely under the thumb of the Allies. Unfortunately for the treaty-makers, a rebel Turkish government had established itself at Angora in Asia Minor, and flatly refused to sign the Treaty of Sèvres.

Turkey

It remained for Greece to secure by arms what she had already secured on paper by diplomacy. In 1920, however, King Constantine, deposed in 1917, returned to Greece and was warmly welcomed back to his throne. Venizelos retired, and Greece lost the goodwill of the Allies. The Greek campaign of 1922 in Asia Minor was a disastrous failure, and the Greeks were driven out of the country. Constantine was again deposed, and the new Prime Minister, with four of his colleagues and the commander-in-chief, were court-martialled and shot. The Turks advanced on the neutral zones, and Poincaré, now Prime Minister of France, withdrew the French troops. The British remained, and an Anglo-Turkish war seemed imminent. Happily counsels of prudence prevailed on both sides. The British General Harrington arranged an armistice with Mustapha Kemal, the rebel Turkish ruler and general (we have already met him in Gallipoli), and the revision of the Treaty of Sèvres was remitted to a Conference at Lausanne. By the Treaty of Lausanne Turkey recovered not only Smyrna, but also the European province of Thrace, which had been allotted to Greece; Turkey, in fact, regained her European frontier of 1913. The Allies agreed to evacuate Constantinople, and Turkey agreed that the Allies should share with her the control of the Straits.

The result was a resounding triumph of "Orientalism" over Europe, and as such it was noted all over the East. The "sick man" of Crimean days had some life in him yet. Where Germany had failed, Turkey had succeeded in defying the once victorious Allies.

The treaties which followed the Great War have suffered the same fate as the treaties that followed the Napoleonic War. Many have blamed and few have praised them. Such is perhaps the inevitable fate of treaties concluding any really great war. War may be compared with a surgical operation; it is so painful while we suffer from it that we expect the suffering to be compensated with corresponding benefits, and we look to the final treaties to confer those benefits. While the war is

An Estimate of the Treaties

in progress, we console ourselves for the suffering it entails by promising ourselves a future altogether different from and better than the past as a reward of victory. Yet treaties of peace are inevitably made under the most unfavourable conditions. The passions of war are still rife. Moreover, haste is imperative. The first need is peace, and there can be no real peace till the treaty has been signed. An imperfect treaty constructed in a few months may be better for the world than a better treaty constructed in the course of several years. It is most unreasonable to expect the statesmen of a Peace Congress to produce a monument of detached political wisdom.

We can easily see that, in slightly different circumstances, the treaties might have been better; if the Peace Congress had met in neutral Switzerland instead of vindictive Paris; if Wilson had possessed the skill and adroitness of Lloyd George; if Lloyd George had possessed the magnanimous wisdom of Wilson; if either or both had possessed the expert knowledge and firmness of Clemenceau. In some respects the treaties may be proved to be worse than those of Paris and Vienna a hundred years before. Yet in one respect they were better. The League of Nations was a much better organ for future international control than the Quadruple Alliance of Castlereagh or the Holy Alliance of Alexander. It is a great mistake to blame the treaties for the subsequent ills of Europe. Some of those ills were the inevitable product of the war, and no treaty could have averted them. Others were the product of post-treaty folly. The future destiny of Europe and the world was not laid down once and for all in 1919. It is in the hands of our contemporaries and their successors.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION: WRITTEN IN 1928

It is no part of the plan of this History to enter upon a narrative of events since the making of the Peace Treaties. Certain events in years later than 1919 have indeed been included in the previous chapter, because they complete the story of the treaties. This chapter is no more than a survey of a few big features of the "Post-war World" as they appear in 1928.

When the historian, writing in the year 2000, looks back upon the second quarter of the century then ending, what will he find to be its leading features? We may hope that he will be able to say: "During these years the League of Nations established its position so firmly that the Great Powers ceased either to fear or to threaten war against one another. Armies and navies were reduced to small dimensions, and the money formerly spent on them was devoted to social reforms." What is more certain, however, is that he will find much to say about "the decline of European domination."

The Decline of European Domination

When Columbus and Vasco da Gama had made their voyages to America and India, a period of four centuries began in which European peoples secured a greater and greater domination over all the other continents. At first the process was slow. It was only in 1680 or thereabouts that a German philosopher wrote to King Louis XIV that "the weakness of the Orientals had now been revealed." We need not here recapitulate the story of a process that reached its climax in the nineteenth century. The Americas and Australia were colonised by European peoples; Africa

was partitioned; Turkey was "a sick man"; Russia conquered Siberia and Great Britain conquered India; China saw privileged European settlements established on her coast.

Meanwhile a reverse process had already begun. The Americas, though colonised by European peoples, emancipated themselves from European control. Japan proved that an Oriental race could imitate European methods and defeat the armies of a European empire. In Egypt and in India the native peoples began to demand self-government. Then came the Great War—the "Civil War" of Europe. It weakened and discredited Europe in the eyes of the world outside as much as the Wars of the Roses discredited England in the eyes of her neighbours. As soon as it was over, we find an altogether new attitude towards Europe in the other continents. Egypt demands independence, and secures it, with certain limitations, in 1922. India, though granted a scheme of partial self-government in 1920, the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, is convulsed by an agitation for Swaraj, or complete independence. In China, rival leaders who are united on nothing else, are at one in their desire to destroy the rights and privileges of the European commercial colonies. Turkey defies the victors of the Great War: contrast the history of Mustapha Kemal in 1922 with that of Mehemet Ali in 1840 (see p. 492). On the other side of the world, the United States has now supplanted both England and Germany as the principal centre of the world's industry and finance. All the principal European communities are debtors to America, and very few of them except ourselves are paying more than a fraction of their debts. America regards Europe, it seems, somewhat as Rome regarded Greece—as her forerunner, her mistress in art and culture, a museum of priceless antiquities which rich Americans visit in order to complete their education. Even in Africa it is not to Europe that the native peoples are turning for the foundation of their civilisation. Europe still dominates Africa politically and economically, but for a religion the backward peoples are turning, in

all but a very few provinces, not to Christianity but to Islam.[1]

We pass to smaller subjects, from Europe in relation to the world, to Europe within itself. Apart from the changes directly attributable to the treaties, and so already discussed, three principal features distinguish Europe of to-day from Europe before the war: the German Republic, Bolshevik Russia, and Fascist Italy.

The German Republic

The German Revolution began in October 1918, when the prospects of Germany in the war had obviously become hopeless. The last Chancellor of the Empire, the liberal-minded Prince Max of Baden, persuaded the Kaiser to grant an entirely new parliamentary constitution, surrendering his own prerogatives and destroying the power of the military General Staff. One is reminded of Napoleon III's eleventh-hour "Liberal Empire" of 1869. But it was too late. The mutiny of the fleet was the sign for a general demonstration of public opinion, and Hindenburg persuaded the Kaiser to abdicate and leave the country on the eve of the Armistice. All the minor German royal Houses fell at the same time. Military monarchy, says a German writer, "died without a death struggle, like an oil lamp that goes out for lack of oil, without a breath of air to blow it out." Prince Max surrendered the Chancellorship to Ebert, a moderate Socialist and a saddler by trade. But Prince Max's parliament survived, though without the monarch, until the new Republican Constitution was established by the German National Assembly at Weimar in August 1919. Before that date a formidable Bolshevist, or Communist, rising had been vigorously suppressed.

President Hindenburg

The new Germany, like the old, is a Federal State in which each of the provinces, eighteen in number, enjoys large powers of self-government, but it is no longer dominated by the Prussian Junker class. Its early history has in some respects resembled the early history of the Third Republic of France. Both were the

[1] On this point see a striking passage in Toynbee's *The World after the Peace Conference*, p. 81.

outcome of military defeat; both have survived in spite of the fact that a large part, perhaps more than half, of the populations of the two countries were monarchist at heart. But monarchists are at a loss when there is no eligible monarch. There is no eligible monarch in Germany because the Hohenzollerns are identified in the popular mind not with the German nation, but with the old Prussian tyranny. In fact, the hero of the Republic is himself a monarchist, the fine old soldier Hindenburg. As soon as the Republic was proclaimed, he placed his services at the disposal of the new plebeian President Ebert. In 1924, when he was elected President, he at once abandoned his military uniform and assumed the frockcoat of a civilian, and that fact means far more in once-militarist Germany than it could mean in England. Many of those who voted for him hoped that he would use his position to work for a monarchist restoration, and his election was openly deplored in France and England. But he has disappointed the hopes of his extreme supporters, and is now entirely trusted by the Republicans. He has been compared in Germany with Washington; the parallel is not a very close one, but there can be no doubt that History will remember his name with honour. It is a strange career. Till nearly seventy he was reckoned a second-rate German general; a lucky opportunity and perhaps the guidance of a greater soldier, Ludendorff, made him famous at the very beginning of the war; he rose to be commander-in-chief and the very embodiment of German military power; since the defeat of his country's armies, he has won a second and nobler reputation. We may contrast his fate with that of Ludendorff. Ludendorff refused to accept the Republic and, after several unsuccessful conspiracies, is now entirely discredited.

The German Republic necessarily began its career in a state of penal servitude, under sentence imposed at Versailles. Since that date it has achieved its restoration to the rank of Great Power. The first step was the Dawes Agreement of 1924, which settled on tolerable terms the payments due from Germany to her

The Restoration of Germany

former enemies. The next step, 1925, was the Treaty of Locarno, whereby France, Germany and Great Britain agreed to respect for ever the present Franco-German frontier. The third step, 1926, was the admission of Germany to the League of Nations with the rank of a Great Power. In certain respects Germany has set, under compulsion, an example which other States might well voluntarily follow. A clause of the German Constitution runs: "Non-German-speaking sections of the people are not to be interfered with, either by legislation or administration, in their free national development, least of all in the use of their native tongue in education and in the administration of justice."

Bolshevik Russia

The Russian Bolshevik Revolution, which was accomplished at the end of 1917, was, in name at least, the establishment of a socialist State. Socialism means the ownership by the State of all forms of capital, the "means of production," including, of course, all land, workshops and factories. The theory of socialism was devised in Western Europe, as a result of the evils of the industrial revolution, and it is very strange that the first "Socialist State" should be established in an Eastern country, a land of peasants, where industrial town life is on a very small scale. The fact is that the strictly socialist side of Bolshevism is not the most important part of it. The first Russian Revolution, in the spring of 1917, is to be regarded as a revolt of the Russian people against their rulers. The Russians themselves were not, and never have been, "Europeans" in our sense of the word. Their rulers, since the days of Peter the Great two hundred years before, had forced Russia into playing the part of a European "Great Power." That part had now involved the Russian people in intolerable sufferings for a cause they could not, and did not want to understand. They would endure it no longer. In the chaos that ensued, a small faction of able and resolute socialist fanatics, mostly Jews, was enabled to seize power because they alone definitely promised to put an immediate end to the war. The triumph of the Bolsheviks, when it came, was very much an anti-European triumph, and we

may set it beside the other evidences of the decline of European predominance which we have already enumerated. We see evidence of this in the fact that they have moved their capital eastwards from Petrograd, the capital of Peter the Great, to the old semi-oriental capital of Moscow; we see further evidence of it in the fact that the Bolsheviks persecute the Christian Church.

After the Great War was over, the British Government spent many millions, which could ill be spared, on financing various attempts by Russian soldiers, Koltchak in Siberia and Denikin in Southern Russia among others, to overthrow the Bolsheviks. It hardly ever pays to interfere in another country's civil wars. The money was thrown away; Koltchak and Denikin were defeated; the Bolsheviks were made stronger than before, and were given some excuse for the policy of virulent hostility to the British Empire which they have ever since pursued.

The Bolshevik government is a tyranny of the severest order. The Bolsheviks themselves are a small minority, and every kind of freedom is ruthlessly suppressed. Their cruelties have been extreme, but it is absurd to saddle "socialism" with their crimes. Socialism may be a very mischievous theory or it may not, but Bolshevik cruelty is Russian cruelty, oriental cruelty; precedents for many of the atrocities of the Bolsheviks could be found in the conduct of the Tsarist governments of the previous two hundred years. Their villainies do not surpass those of the Turks, whom no one has suspected of socialism. At present their authority seems firmly established; no one can predict what would happen if they fell from power.

In the first years after the war, communism seemed as if it might spread on a formidable scale far beyond the frontiers of Russia. There were for a short time communist governments in Hungary and Bavaria. Fascist Italy In Northern Italy communism was rampant, and the feeble and corrupt parliamentary government seemed to show little capacity to deal with the menace. In these circumstances, Italian ex-soldiers formed themselves in societies

called Fascisti for the preservation of their country from communism. Fascismo (Fascism) took its name from a group (*fascio*) of Italian members of parliament who, after the disaster of Caporetto, were determined to fight to the end. Thus the movement began as "anti-pacifist"; it became "anti-socialist"; and, since the parliamentary government would not act, it became "anti-parliamentary." In October 1922 there were Fascist risings all over Italy. The Prime Minister presented to King Victor Emmanuel III an order for calling out the army against the rebels. The King refused; the Prime Minister resigned; and the King sent for the Fascist leader, Mussolini, who has ruled Italy ever since.

Fascism, like Bolshevism, is a tyranny. It openly boasts of the fact, and pours scorn on all forms of parliamentary government, and such liberal ideals as freedom of the press. It exalts the authority of the State above the freedom of the individual. It has, in fact, much in common with Bonapartism, and, like Bonapartism, it believes in a vigorous foreign policy. Mussolini, with his warlike gestures, is the only figure in Europe to-day who occasionally reminds us of the ex-Kaiser. One result of this is that France, though she seems to have made the beginnings of reconciliation with Germany, is apt to be on bad terms with Italy. Yet Mussolini is an able man and has done much for the internal prosperity of his country. His government seems, like that of the Bolsheviks in Russia, to be firmly established.

Our own country has escaped revolution. True to its habits of the last two hundred and forty years, it has managed to develop as rapidly perhaps as any of its neighbours without suffering popular violence or constitutional transformation. Socialism has spread, but British socialism, apart from a handful of communists, is hard to distinguish from the more advanced kinds of liberalism. Of course it has yet to be tested with political power, for the brief Labour Government of 1924 did not control a majority of the votes in the House of Commons. We have also had, in 1926, a "General Strike," but, whatever we may think of it, its authors expressly claim that it

Great Britain

was not intended to effect any revolutionary purpose; anyhow, it was a complete failure, and seems unlikely to be repeated.

One result of the war, strange as it may seem, was a very real improvement in the standard of living of the working classes. There was more than enough work for all; wages were forced up more rapidly than prices; the separation allowances paid to the wives of men serving in the forces made a better provision for the children than the wages the same men would have earned at home. In fact we financed our war effort on a more generous (or extravagant) scale than any other belligerent. In its later stages the war was costing us £7,000,000 a day. Though we taxed ourselves more severely than any other belligerent, we increased the National Debt from £700,000,000 to £8,000,000,000. After the war more money had to be raised to pay the interest on the debt than was raised before the war to pay for the army, the navy, the debt, and all our social services. We have paid off a fraction of this debt, but the bulk of it remains. Other countries, France, Germany and Italy, have wiped out much or all of their debt by the simple process of lowering their currency. For example, if the State borrows £100 when the pound is worth a pound, and afterwards so manages its money that the pound comes to be worth five shillings, or one shilling, the "real" debt will have obviously dwindled to £25 or £5.

While we still bear our debt, our exporting industries have suffered a terrible decline. Ever since 1922 there have been over a million unemployed. The insurance system has preserved the unemployed from destitution, but only by laying a severe strain upon the finances of the country. For a considerable part of the cost of maintaining the unemployed has been defrayed by the Poor Law authorities out of local rates, and the rise of the rates in industrial areas has seriously hampered industry and thus caused additional unemployment. New industries, such as the motor industry and artificial silk, have sprung up and prospered in the Midlands and the South, but the old industries of the North

that were the bases of Victorian prosperity—coal, cotton, wool, shipbuilding, engineering—have passed through very bad times, and it is doubtful how far they can ever hope to recover. Conditions are changing. We were the first to develop these industries on a large scale, and could rely upon a great market abroad for our goods. More and more, other nations are using their own coal deposits, establishing their own factories, and satisfying their own needs. Moreover, our high standards add to our difficulties. Our men demand a standard of living which entails wages far in advance of what satisfies most of the wage-earners of the Continent. It is right that they should do so. The road to recovered prosperity must lie not through a lowering of the standard of living, which would be in itself a further departure from prosperity, but through better work and better organisation of industry.

Something has already been said on the effect of the war on India, Egypt and the African peoples. The "White Empire," if we may use that term to denote the great self-governing British Dominions, stood the test of war triumphantly. The war was their "coming of age." The armies of Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand distinguished themselves again and again. Canada will never forget the Vimy Ridge; Australia and New Zealand will never forget Gallipoli, nor South Africa the East African campaign. The terms of peace evoke less heroic memories but even more important consequences. The statesmen of the Dominions were the colleagues and equals of the statesmen of Europe. The League of Nations numbers the Dominions among its member-States, and both South Africa and Australia have accepted Mandates under the League. Again, the shrinkage of our European commerce has given a new importance to commerce within the Empire, and Imperial trade is being fostered both by government regulation and by the organisation of voluntary effort.

The British Empire

It is right that the last paragraphs of this book should be devoted to the League of Nations. Some people seem to have a very odd idea of the League of Nations; they think

of it as a society of harmless and useless idealists pleading for peace and goodwill in a wicked and disregarding world. It is nothing of the kind. The League of Nations *is* the Nations Leagued; it is an organisation through which the governments of fifty-five States can, and do, co-operate for the prevention of wars, the removal of the causes of wars, and the promotion of the common interests of the world. These fifty-five States include practically all the self-governing States of the world except the United States and Russia. The United States remains unattached, but it has frequently assisted the League in its work. Even Bolshevik Russia sent delegates to the Disarmament Conference of 1927, and though the public utterances of the Bolshevik delegates were neither sensible nor helpful it is said that they showed themselves more reasonable in unofficial discussions.

The League of Nations

The principal organs of the League are three: the Secretariat, the Assembly and the Council. The Secretariat consists of the permanent officials who devote their full time to carrying on the day-to-day business of the League. The head of it is an Englishman, Sir Eric Drummond, formerly a high official of the Foreign Office, and his staff includes experts drawn from at least a dozen nationalities. The Assembly meets once a year and is the general "parliament" of the League, in which all member States are represented on a basis of absolute equality. The Council is the supreme committee of the League, and meets three times a year. It consists of permanent members, the five Great Powers, Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany (added 1926), and Japan; and nine temporary members, elected for a period of years by the Assembly. No line of division is drawn in the "Covenant," or constitution of the League, between the spheres of activity open to the Assembly and the Council; indeed the Covenant expressly affirms that both of them may deal with "any matter within the sphere of action of the League." In practice, however, the Assembly has devoted itself to matters of general principle, and to the organisation of works of international goodwill, whereas the

Organs of the League

Council has done its best work in the settlement of complicated disputes between rival States. Some examples of the work of both Assembly and Council will illustrate this.

At its first meeting, in 1920, the Assembly secured the establishment of the Court of International Justice. It sits at The Hague, in order to be free from the "political" influences of Geneva, and its first President was a Dutchman. When it was established, a well-known English judge said that it was impossible to expect any judge to give a verdict against a case submitted by the government of his own country. This forecast proved mistaken, for a few years later the French judge concurred with his colleagues in a judgment dismissing a claim brought by France against Great Britain. A judgment was also given in favour of Germany against Poland at the time when Germany was outside the League and had no representative on the Bench of Judges.

In 1922 the Republic of Austria, partly through her own fault but more through circumstances beyond her control, was on the verge of economic ruin: her exchequer was empty, and her people were starving. She applied to the League. The Assembly appointed a Committee of Inquiry, and it produced a scheme which was accepted by the Assembly, the Great Powers, and Austria herself. An international loan was raised to enable the Austrian government to carry on till 1925, the loan being guaranteed by ten strong governments. In return for this loan, Austria had to accept the temporary control of an impartial High Commissioner appointed by the League (a Dutchman), and to carry out such reforms as he recommended. The result was an entire success, the best proof of it being that in 1923 Hungary and also Greece, after her defeat at the hands of Turkey, applied to the League for similar assistance on similar terms. Success was again secured. The High Commissioner appointed for Hungary was an American. The case of Greece was presented to the League by Dr. Nansen, the famous Norwegian explorer in days gone by, and since the war the greatest of

Relief of Austria, Hungary and Greece

all the servants of the League in its work of organising international goodwill. We use the term "goodwill" advisedly, for the work of the League is not charity. The restoration of Austria, Hungary and Greece was a strictly business proposition approached and solved on business lines. The benefit accrued to the restored States in the first instance, but ultimately to all their neighbours near and far. For example, before Austria applied to the League, the British Government had made her a loan of £2,500,000. If Austria had been allowed to collapse, that money would have been lost. To-day the British Government is receiving in interest on that loan every year more than the whole annual contribution of Great Britain to the expenses of the League of Nations.

We pass to the Council. It has settled about twenty more or less important disputes between States; a dispute between Sweden and Finland as to the possession of the Aland Islands; a dispute between Jugo-Slavia and Albania as to the frontier between them; the frontier question between Germany and Poland in Upper Silesia; a very acute crisis between Italy and Greece, arising from the murder of an Italian general on Greek soil and the subsequent seizure by Italy of the Greek island of Corfu; an outbreak of frontier warfare between Greece and Bulgaria arising out of the murder of a Greek by a Bulgarian sentry.[1] The settlements of these questions may not in all cases have been ideal. The point is, they were the result of careful and absolutely impartial inquiry; they were accepted as such by the parties concerned; and they have been found, in practice, workable. The best illustration of the rising prestige of the Council is that it is now attended, almost as a matter of course, not by some "underlings," as often happened in the first few years of its existence, but by the Foreign Secretaries themselves of all the nations concerned.

Settlement of Disputes

The most difficult problem of the League is disarmament.

[1] Short accounts of all these, and other, cases can be found in Prof. Noel Baker's excellent little book, *The League of Nations at Work*.

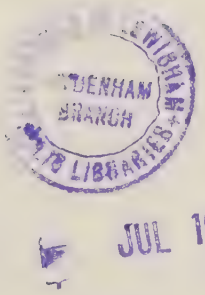
Here, in spite of strenuous efforts to reach an agreement, little progress, if any, has been made. But that is hardly surprising. The League is not a worker of miracles. Armaments are the product of fear, and fear deeply ingrained becomes a habit of the mind. We must cure the bad habit of fear before we can expect disarmament. The League, with its constant and regular meetings, where the statesmen of many nations meet as colleagues and friends, is preparing the soil; when the soil has been prepared, the crop will grow.

Disarmament

PRINCIPAL DATES

1904.	The Anglo-French Entente.
	The Russo-Japanese War.
1905.	The Kaiser at Tangier : first Morocco crisis.
1906.	The Conference of Algeçiras.
1907.	The Anglo-Russian Entente.
1908.	The Austrian annexation of Bosnia.
1911.	Agadir : the second Morocco crisis.
1912.	The war of the Balkan League against Turkey.
1913.	The war between members of the Balkan League.
1914.	The murder of Archduke Francis Ferdinand.
	The German invasion of France.
	The Russian invasion of Galicia.
1915.	The Russian retreat.
	The Dardanelles and Gallipoli expeditions.
	The entry of Italy.
	The entry of Bulgaria and the defeat of Serbia.
1916.	The Battles of Verdun and the Somme.
	The entry of Roumania.
	The fall of Kut.
	The conquest of German East Africa.
1917.	The U boat campaign.
	The entry of America.
	The Russian Revolution.
	Nivelle's offensive.
	The Battles of Paschendaele and Cambrai.
	The Battle of Caporetto.
	The conquest of Baghdad and Jerusalem.
1918.	The final battles of the Western Front.
	The collapse of Bulgaria, Turkey, Austria.
	The Armistice.
1919.	The Peace Conference.
1920.	The first Session of the League of Nations.

1922. The Fascist Revolution in Italy.
The defeat of Greece by Turkey.
1923. The French occupation of the Ruhr.
1924. The Dawes Plan of German Reparations.
1925. The Treaty of Locarno.
1926. The admission of Germany to the League of Nations.



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